Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-097
Friday
17 May 1996

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-097 *17 May 1996*

CONTENTS

NOTICE: An * indicates material that may not be disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Assembly Speaker Addresses APU Council Opening Session *[Damascus Radio]* . 1
Inter-Arab: Jordanian Speaker Addresses APU *[Amman TV]* 2
Inter-Arab: Kuwaiti Speaker Stresses Importance of Solidarity at APU *[Kuwait Radio]* 2
Inter-Arab: PNC Speaker on Challenges to Arab Nation at APU *[Jericho VOP]* 2
Inter-Arab: Syria's Qaddurah Receives Iraqi Delegation at APU *[INA]* 2
Inter-Arab: Birri—Arabs Considering Halting Normalization With Israel *[Beirut Radio]* 3
Inter-Arab: Arab League Chief Views Ties to Israel, Turkey *[MENA]* 3
Inter-Arab: League Chief on Libya, Arab Solidarity, Nuclear Issues *[MENA]* 3
Inter-Arab: League Asks UNEP To Investigate Dimona Leak Reports *[Cairo Radio]* 4
Inter-Arab: 'Arafat Maintains Jordanian Custody of Jerusalem Holy Sites *[AL-QUDS 15 May]* 4
Inter-Arab: Libyan Minister Raises Sanctions Issue at Transport Meeting *[MENA]* 5

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Said To Suffer 'Minor Stroke' Earlier This Week *[Jerusalem TV]* 5
Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Arrives in Ramallah From Nabulus *[Gaza TV]* 5
Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat To Meet Officials, Citizens in Ramallah 17 May *[Jericho VOP]* .. 6
Palestinian Affairs: Jordanian 'Allegations' on Armed Infiltrators Denied *[SANA]* 6
Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council Discusses Reports; 'Arafat Attends *[Gaza TV]* 6
Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council Ends Meetings in Bethlehem 16 May *[Jericho VOP]* 7
Palestinian Affairs: Official Denies Fatah Behind Intifadah Leaflet *[AL-QUDS 15 May]* 7

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: No Agreement on Functions of Monitoring Committee Reached *[Damascus Radio]* 8

ARAB AFRICA

Egypt

Egypt: Musa Comments on Visit of China's Jiang Zemin *[MENA]* 9

Libya

Libya: Authorities Said Preparing To Expel Palestinians *[MENA]* 9
Libya: International Muslim Conference Urges Action Against U.S. *[JANA]* 9
Libya: Millions of Muslims To Mobilize Public Opinion Against U.S. *[JANA]* 10
Libya: Human Shield To Form To Protect Tarhunah Tunnel *[JANA]* 11

Morocco

Morocco: Minister, UN Representative Discuss Western Sahara *[Rabat TV]* 11

Sudan

Sudan: Minister Does Not Rule Out War With Eritrea *[MENA]* 11

Sudan: Another Rebel Leader Signs Peace Deal With Government *[Omdurman Radio]* 11
Sudan: South Africa Bans Arms Sale to Sudan *[AL-WAFD 12 May]* 12

Western Sahara

Western Sahara: President Abdelaziz Sends Message to UN Security Council *[Algiers Radio]* 12

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Qatar

Qatar: Trade Ties With Iran Intensified *[London AL-HAYAH 14 May]* 13

United Arab Emirates

UAE: Shaykh Zayid Said Ready To Aid Lebanon *[Beirut Radio]* 13
UAE: Lebanon's al-Hariri Holds News Conference in Abu Dhabi *[WAKH]* 13
UAE: PRC Vice Premier Arrives for Talks *[WAKH]* 14

Yemen

Yemen: Foreign Minister, PRC Vice Premier Hold Talks *[Sanaa Radio]* 14
Yemen: House Speaker, PRC Vice Premier View Bilateral Cooperation *[Sanaa Radio]* 14
Yemen: Cooperation, Aid Agreement Signed With PRC Delegation *[Sanaa Radio]* 15
Yemen: PRC Vice Premier Meets President Salih, Leaves Sanaa *[Sanaa Radio]* 15
Yemen: Cooperation Agreements Signed With Cuba *[Sanaa Radio]* 15

IRAQ

Iraq: Iranian Resistance Spokesman—Plot To Kill Rajavi Aborted *[INA]* 16
Iraq: Assembly Speaker Receives Jordanian Ambassador *[INA]* 16
Iraq: 'Huge' Explosion Reported at Interior Ministry Building Early May *[Voice of Rebellious Iraq]* 16

ISRAEL

Israel: Peres Reportedly Urges Arab-Western Anti-Iran Alliance *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 17
Israel: Savir Foresees Coordinated International Anti-Iran Action *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 17
Israel: Security Elements View Iran Terror Efforts *[THE JERUSALEM POST 17 May]* 18
Israel: Iran Said Ordering Attacks on Israeli, Jewish, U.S. Targets *[MA'ARIV 17 May]* 19
Israel: Peres Clarifies Lebanon Agreement, Rejects Iran's Denials *[Jerusalem Radio]* 20
Israel: Peres Offers 3 Permanent Borders, Referendum on All Accords *[HA'ARETZ 17 May]* 20
Israel: Details of Hamas 'Terror Attacks' Manual Published *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 17 May]* 20
Israel: Jordanian Envoy Visits Netanyahu, Denies Peres Favored *[Jerusalem Radio]* 21
Israel: Ramallah Declared 'Closed Military Zone' for 'Arafat Visit *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 21
Israel: Gallup Poll Shows Peres With 6-Point Lead Over Netanyahu *[MA'ARIV 17 May]* 22
Israel: Dahaf Institute Poll Finds Peres With 5-Point Lead *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 17 May]* 22

JORDAN

Jordan: Al-Khazraji Denies Rumors of Leaving Jordan *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 16 May]* ... 23
Jordan: King Calls Visit to Turkey 'Very Successful' *[Amman TV]* 23
Jordan: Recording Said To Verify Minister's Remarks on U.S. Planes *[JORDAN TIMES 16-17 May]* 24

LEBANON

Lebanon: Buwayz Says Parties Close on Forming Monitoring Committee *[Beirut Radio]* 25
Lebanon: Al-Hirawi To Address Arab Parliamentarians in Qana 'Today' *[VOL]* 25

SYRIA

Syria: Information Minister on U.S. Talks, Israel-Turkey Accord *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 26

Syria: Minister Explains Stance on Mideast Issues *[Damascus Radio]* 26
Syria: Al-Ahmar—U.S-Backed Aggression Failed To Achieve Aims *[Damascus Radio]* 27
Syria: Commentary—Aid to Israel Threatens World Peace *[Damascus Radio]* 27
Syria: Israel Accused of Perpetuating 'War Machine' *[SYRIA TIMES 15 May]* 28

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Rabbani Returns to Kabul After Iran, Turkmenistan Visit *[Message of Freedom]* 29
Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Comments on Talks With Government, Security *[IRNA]* 29
Afghanistan: Mojadeddi Asks ECO To Keep Afghanistan's Seat Vacant *[Message of Freedom]* 29
Afghanistan: Gaylani Urges High Council To End Current Crisis *[Message of Freedom]* 29
Afghanistan: Mojaddedi To Visit Dostam for Talks on Latest Developments *[Message of Freedom]* 30
Afghanistan: Skirmishes Break Out in Vardak Province *[IRNA]* 30
Afghanistan: Taleban Boasts 20,000 Fighters *[Message of Freedom]* 30

India

India: New Prime Minister Presides Over First Cabinet Meeting *[Delhi Radio]* 30
India: Portfolios of New Cabinet Ministers Announced *[Delhi TV]* 31
India: World Leaders, Local Organizations Congratulate Vajpayee *[Delhi Radio]* 31
India: New Prime Minister Accuses Pakistan of Kashmir Subversion *[AFP]* 31
India: Prime Minister Vajpayee Pays 'Courtesy Call' on Rao *[Delhi TV]* 32
India: Poll Shows Vajpayee Most Popular Choice for Prime Minister *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 15 May]* 32
India: Left Front To Launch 'Agitation' Against BJP Government *[Delhi Radio]* 33
India: Congress Decides To 'Pull Down' BJP Government *[Delhi TV]* 34
India: AICC Official Comments on Support for Rao, Coalition *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 15 May]* 34
India: Foreign Institutional Investors Said Scared of NF-LF Rule *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 15 May]* 35
India: Kashmir Government Issues Warning to 'Absenting' Employees *[Delhi Radio]* 35
India: Government Employees Join Kashmir Strike *[Islamabad TV]* 35
India: 2 'Pakistan-Trained Militants' Killed in Kashmir *[Delhi TV]* 36
India: 8 'Foreign Mercenaries' Killed in Kashmir Encounter *[Delhi Radio]* 36
India: 'At Least 10' Killed, Over 20,000 Homeless in Assam Unrest *[Delhi Radio]* 36
India: Gunmen Kill Police Official, 3 Others in Assam *[Delhi Radio]* 36
India: Commentary on Pakistani Role in Afghanistan *[Delhi International]* 36
India: Article Views Ring Magnet Issue, National Interests *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 15 May]* 37

Iran

Iran: Construction Minister Meets Cuban Official *[IRNA]* 38
Iran: Visiting Kuwaiti Minister Meets Officials *[Tehran TV]* 38
Iran: Rafsanjani Expresses Desire To Improve Relations With EU *[THE EUROPEAN 22 May]* 38
Iran: Rowhani—U.S., Israel See Tehran as 'Sole Stumbling Block' *[IRNA]* 39
Iran: Israel, U.S. Said Attempting To Implicate Iran in al-Mijdad Affair *[IRNA]* 39
Iran: Foreign Ministry Refutes Recent Peres Accusations *[IRNA]* 39
Iran: Yemeni, Iranian Transportation Ministers Hold Talks *[Tehran TV]* 40
Iran: Writer on Tadic War Crimes Trial *[KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL 9 May]* 40
Iran: Speech at University Cancelled After Protest, Clashes *[AKHBAR 13 May]* 40
Iran: Mayor Denies Charges of Cheating in Elections *[HAMSHAHRI 13 May]* 41
Iran: Majles Approves Guardian Council Amendments *[HAMSHAHRI 13 May]* 42
Iran: President Comments on Need To Eradicate Poverty *[KHORASAN 30 Apr]* 42

Iran: Editors Back Formation of Journalists Association *[RESALAT 11 May]* 43
Iran: Commentary Views Importance of Railroad Construction *[HAMSHAHRI 13 May]* 44
Iran: Astara Deemed 'Open International Port of Entry' *[IRNA]* 44
Iran: 'One of World's Biggest Radio Stations' Opens in Sirjan *[Tehran Radio]* 44
Iran: Paper Publishes People's Letters *[PAYAM-E DANESHJU 5 Mar]* 45

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal: Foreign Minister Comments on Indian Border, Other Issues *[THE KATHMANDU POST 16 May]* 50
Nepal: Communist Party Opposition to Government Viewed *[Beijing XINHUA]* 51

Pakistan

Pakistan: Bhutto Emphasizes Democratic System *[THE NATION 16 May]* 51
Pakistan: Imran Khan Comments on New Party *[THE NATION 12 May]* 53
Pakistan: Leghari Interviewed About Kashmir, India's Elections, Economy *[THE NEWS 14 May]* 55
Pakistan: Editorial Views Leghari's Advice to India on Kashmir Talks *[JANG 15 May]* 57

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: LTTE Reports Concern Over Detained Tamil Youths *[Tamil Eelam News WWW]* 58
Sri Lanka: Jaffna Reconstruction To Proceed With Foreign Aid *[Colombo International]* 59
Sri Lanka: Private Sector Urged To Import Rice; Duty Cut to Zero *[DAILY NEWS 17 May]* .. 59

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Assembly Speaker Addresses APU Council Opening Session

JN1505153596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 15 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Under the patronage of President Hafiz al-Asad, the 27th session of the Arab Parliamentary Union [APU] Council opened at the Umayyad Conference Palace this morning under the banner: "The Role of the Arab Parliamentarians in Reviving Arab Solidarity." President Hafiz al-Asad was represented at the opening session by People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah. [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah delivered a speech at the opening session, conveying President Hafiz al-Asad's greetings to the participants, as well as his hope that they will succeed in reaching resolutions that enhance Arab solidarity and link the Arab nation's capabilities for the benefit of great causes.

Discussing the regional and international changes that face our nation and the world, the People's Assembly speaker said that these changes prove every day that the countries of the world are determined to absorb the challenges of development and join forces for the development process.

Qaddurah said: Our nation is facing many difficulties, which we should not take lightly. Who among us has not noticed the injustices to our nation caused by Israel's occupation, by various attempts to dominate us, and by our state of fragmentation and the lack of a united position?

Qaddurah wondered: Who among us does not realize the danger of the barbaric aggression against fraternal Lebanon and the massacres committed under the slogan of resisting terrorism? Qaddurah said that these practices amount to state terrorism, which Israel carries out with the support of its friends to harm other nations' right to defend themselves, resist occupation, and build their present and future.

Qaddurdah said: You represent your people and societies, and you are feeling our worries. We all believe that the Arab parliamentarians are able to contribute to repairing the nations' situation through their legislative councils or their individual and collective efforts. Qaddurah said that, under these circumstances, parliamentarians are more needed than ever to confront and solve the nation's problems, bolster its solidarity, build a new culture that respects nations' rights and freedoms, and lay the groundwork for world justice and peace.

He added: If we do not call the one that occupies our land; shells our people; commits massacres; kills our children, women, and old people; desecrates the homeland's soil with the boots of its soldiers; decides to maintain Jerusalem as its permanent capital; establishes settlements on most of the land it has occupied from Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon; tries to control water resources in several Arab countries; and wants to spread its economic, military, and political hegemony over our region — we say that if we do not call him an enemy, what will we call him?

He also said: I do not believe that international changes will cancel nations' rights, that sweet talk in the speeches and statements of our enemy will make us relinquish our national soil and rights, and that the difficulty we are facing will justify the collapse of our solidarity and the division of our positions on the pretext that each of us has his own circumstances and his own right to sovereignty and that noninterference in domestic affairs should be maintained, although we completely respect these principles.

He added: We have one consistent pan-Arab cause: the liberation of every particle of soil of each country. This is the basic mission of all our countries, and any injustice against any country will amount to an aggression against all of us. Are not we the sons of one nation?

Qaddurah said: Syria's position is clear, sincere, and simple. It believes that the liberation of the occupied Arab territories is a pan-Arab duty. At the same time, Syria will not relinquish any particle of its national soil and will not accept any peace of submission, pressure, or reconciliation that does not restore all the usurped rights, that will harm the national personality, that will reinforce hegemony, and that will relinquish the nation's rights and future, as well as its right to play its role in building human civilization.

Qaddurah then talked about the need for Arab parliamentary efforts, saying that promoting democracy and pluralism, enhancing Arab parliamentary action, and enabling the Arab legislative institutions to play their role and build the institutions of the civilized society are among our principal missions and are, at the same time, an important tool to develop our societies, achieve progress, and build a solid basis for a new start to absorb the facts of the age and lead the society into the 21st century. [passage omitted]

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Inter-Arab: Jordanian Speaker Addresses APU

JN1505202296 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 15 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Speaker of the House of Representatives Sa'd Hayil al-Surur called for building Arab ranks. In a speech at the 27th session of the Arab Parliamentary Union [APU] Council in Damascus, al-Surur urged Arabs to stand by the Palestinians and help them achieve their rights and establish their independent state on their national soil. Al-Surur also urged support for Syrian and Lebanese efforts to restore their land and rights completely. He said the Arabs will have no role in the world unless they build their future within the framework of protection of public freedoms and human rights.

Inter-Arab: Kuwaiti Speaker Stresses Importance of Solidarity at APU

LD1405215396 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 2100 GMT 14 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The speaker of the National Assembly, Ahmad 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Sa'dun, stressed on his arrival this evening in the Syrian capital, Damascus, the importance of finding a suitable formula for Arab solidarity and the importance of Arab parliamentarians playing this role.

The National Assembly speaker, who heads the assembly's delegation to the Arab Parliamentary Union's [APU] 27th session, which starts today, said one cannot talk about Arab concord without talking about the reasons that led to the situation in which the Arab nation was living and which in turn led to the existence of a breach in the body of this nation, which is an obvious reference to the unjust Iraqi aggression against the State of Kuwait on 2 August 1990.

Inter-Arab: PNC Speaker on Challenges to Arab Nation at APU

JN1505165896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 15 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At the opening session of the Arab Parliamentary Union's [APU] 27th session in Damascus today, Palestine National Council [PNC] Speaker Salim al-Za'nun said that serious challenges face the Arab nation and that Arab solidarity must be achieved to confront these challenges.

In a press statement after the opening session, al-Za'nun said: This meeting is not an alternative to an Arab summit. However, it compensates for the Arab nation's failure to hold this summit in the wake of the Gulf war. He added that one of the APU objectives is to achieve Arab solidarity, noting that the APU formed a committee led by Chairman Jalal al-Sa'id to hold the necessary contacts in this regard.

The PNC speaker pointed out that there are no disputes over the challenges that face the Arab nation, particularly Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories.

He stressed the need for coordination among the Arab negotiating tracks in order to achieve a real, just, and comprehensive peace in the region.

Regarding the possibility of a meeting with the Kuwaiti National Assembly speaker, Salim al-Za'nun said that such a meeting is not being discussed right now, adding that Palestinian-Kuwaiti relations are not facing any differences.

The APU meetings are scheduled to last two days, during which the cornerstone of the APU building in Damascus will be laid.

Inter-Arab: Syria's Qaddurah Receives Iraqi Delegation at APU

JN1505152296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1123 GMT 15 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 15 May (INA)—Syrian People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah received the Iraqi National Assembly delegation led by Hamid Yusuf Hammadi, head of the National Assembly's Culture, Information, Education, and Youths Committee, here today. The National Assembly delegation is participating in the 27th session of the Arab Parliamentary Union [APU].

Hammadi briefed Qaddurah on U.S. and British pressure and interference in the ongoing UN-Iraqi talks on the issue of exchanging oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs of the Iraqi people. He also stressed the importance of speeding up the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Security Council Resolution 687 in order to lift the total blockade imposed on Iraq after it fulfilled its obligations in accordance with this resolution.

Qaddurah told the National Assembly delegation that Syria supports Iraq and its territorial integrity and sovereignty, that it denounces the methods that increase the Iraqi people's suffering, and that it demands that the lifting of the blockade imposed on Iraq be accomplished more quickly.

Qaddurah added that Syria and Iraq are strategic partners and that coordination between Syria and Iraq and

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

also with other Arab countries is necessary to confront the challenges that face the Arab nation.

Hammadi met with Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, speaker of the Sudanese National Assembly. He also met separately with the speakers and delegations from Jordan, Tunisia, Libya, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. They discussed the relationship between Iraq and the United Nations and the positions of the Security Council member states.

The Arab parliamentary speakers and delegation heads expressed their support for Iraq and called for lifting the blockade imposed on it as soon as possible. They also denounced the pressures and interference by biased parties that want to keep the lifting from being lifted.

Inter-Arab: Birri—Arabs Considering Halting Normalization With Israel

NC1605165596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a news conference held on the sidelines of the Arab Parliamentary Union's [APU] meetings in Damascus, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has said there is unanimous Arab opinion about halting all forms of normalization with Israel until Syria and Lebanon reach a just and comprehensive peace. He said Arab solidarity [with Lebanon] was demonstrated by the Arab parliamentarians' decision to travel to Qana tomorrow to announce the resolutions of their meetings.

On Israel's call for ending the mission of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, Birri said this shows that Israel is seeking to alienate not only the UN forces, but also Security Council Resolution 425 at a time when it claims to be working for peace.

Inter-Arab: Arab League Chief Views Ties to Israel, Turkey

NC1705092296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0715 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 17 May (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has emphasized that peace is a strategic option for the Arabs as long as it is a just and comprehensive peace based on the land-for-peace principle and as long as it is in implementation of the Security Council resolutions.

In an exclusive statement to MENA, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid added that an Arab summit, even if it is a minisummit, deserves commendation because such meetings could pave the way for more expanded summits leading to Arab reconciliation and unity of ranks. He noted that inter-Arab action needs to focus on Arab reconciliation, based on his initiative, which has gained the backing of 14 Arab states so far. He pointed out that there can be no reconciliation without frankness.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid noted that the Arabs and the more general world community rejected the Israeli aggression against Lebanese territory. Such aggression runs counter to efforts to establish peace, which cannot be attained by violence or continuing Israeli occupation of any Arab land. He noted that resistance is a legitimate right for the Lebanese people against the occupation troops. He added that Israel lost by launching an aggression against Lebanon and failed to achieve its goals. He praised the excellent national unity shown by the Lebanese people, resistance steadfastness, and the resistance pledge to remain steadfast until the Israeli occupation ends.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid called on the Arab states to formulate their relations with Israel in light of the circumstances surrounding the Arab-Israeli conflict and to take their time with these relations, because the situation requires this and necessitates that the entire Arab arena be considered.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid reiterated the Arabs' rejection of the recent Israeli-Turkish agreement, noting that it shocked the Arab world. He noted that contacts had been held with Turkish officials in this regard and a meeting was held with a senior Turkish official, who came from Ankara to explain the agreement. He noted that he told the Turkish official, when the latter justified things by saying his country signed similar agreements with 16 other countries, that none of these 16 countries occupies the territory of an Arab state, unlike Israel. He added that the Arab position in this regard is that the agreement is not in line with the historic relations between Turkey and the Arabs or their ties with Turkey, which is regarded as a Muslim neighbor and friend of the Arabs. If that is so, he added, Turkey must care about our friendship too.

Inter-Arab: League Chief on Libya, Arab Solidarity, Nuclear Issues

NC1605164196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1430 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 16 May (MENA) — Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has again emphasized the Arab League's and member states' continuing solidarity with and support for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah in view of the coercive measures imposed by the big powers. He noted that the Arab League is making intensive efforts to find a fair and peaceable solution to the Libyan-Western crisis over the Lockerbie incident.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

In a statement marking his visit to Libya that begins Friday morning [17 May], Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said he will hold talks with Libyan revolution leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi focusing on the Lockerbie crisis and the Arab League's role in finding a peaceful solution to this fabricated crisis. He said that afterwards, he will travel to London to attend a meeting to establish the Friends of the Arab League Society. He said he will have an opportunity to meet with Britain's foreign secretary for further talks on ways to solve the Lockerbie crisis.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid stressed that he fully supports Col. al- Qadhdhafi's call for holding an emergency Arab summit — even a limited one — quickly to address the current Arab situation. He pointed out that the Arab League responded fully to brother Col. al- Qadhdhafi's initiative, and that in his speech before the Arab League Council emergency meeting last month, he called for holding an Arab summit, even a limited one. He noted that to arrange an Arab summit requires contacts and good preparations. He voiced his hope that efforts to hold an Arab summit — even a mini-summit — will succeed, because it will be a step in the right direction.

In reply to a question on the impact of the unjust siege imposed on the Libyan people and ways to strengthen and promote joint Arab action, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that all neighboring countries of the Libyan Jamahiriyah have been adversely affected by the siege, which has also hindered many joint Arab projects.

Discussing Arab reconciliation, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid stressed that the current Arab situation has become "difficult" for many reasons, noting that the events of August 1990 were a fatal blow to Arab solidarity. He said this situation poses great danger, noting the latest Israeli aggression against Lebanon. He underlined that no Arab reconciliation is possible unless it is preceded by frank discussions. He said that after all obstacles are discussed frankly, we may find common ground to bring the Arab nation together. He said: We call for a national, pan-Arab reconciliation and for the Arabs to stand united to confront the current challenges.

Regarding peace in the Middle East, 'Abd-al-Majid stressed that a fair and comprehensive peace cannot be established under the Israeli nuclear horror, which threatens Arab national security. He said there is an imbalance that must be corrected. He stresesd the need for Israel to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and subject its installations to the supervision and guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Inter-Arab: League Asks UNEP To Investigate Dimona Leak Reports

NC1605204596 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Arab League has asked the United Nations Environment Program [UNEP] to carry out the necessary studies to investigate the nuclear leak from the Israeli reactor at Dimona and to take the necessary readings in this regard. This statement was made by UNEP's regional manager for West Asia after he was received by the Arab League secretary general today. He added that UNEP will immediately coordinate stances with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Arab Agency for Atomic Energy to immediately start making a number of arrangements to investigate what the real situation is as regards reports of a nuclear leak from the Israeli reactor at Dimona.

Inter-Arab: 'Arafat Maintains Jordanian Custody of Jerusalem Holy Sites

TA1605133796 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 15 May 96 pp 1, 22

["Exclusive" to AL-QUDS]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, INTERMEDIA — Diplomatic sources disclosed that King Husayn, the Jordanian monarch, told President 'Arafat frankly at the Cairo summit that he considers Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] an illegitimate organization, that he does not provide it with any assistance, and that he recognizes the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The sources said that Jordan made it clear to the Palestinians that although it is not a partner in the final talks between the Palestinians and Israel, it will be directly affected by the results of the talks because any solution to the refugee problem, the Jerusalem issue, the delineation of borders, and other issues will affect Jordan. Therefore, it is in Jordan's interest to establish new coordination with the Palestinian Authority [PA] before and during the PA's engagement in these talks irrespective of any other considerations.

Regarding the Jerusalem issue, the sources said that the two sides agreed to keep the Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem under Jordanian custody. Israel recognized this custody in the Washington Declaration of 1994, which considers the holy shrines being held in trust for the Palestinians. Jordan will be the first country to recognize Palestinian sovereignty over Jerusalem in the event that they regain the city, but if Jordan were to now relinquish custody and protection of the holy sites,

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

this would be in Israel's interest, something that the two sides do not desire.

The sources said that as soon as the Israeli elections are over, the Egyptians, the Jordanians, and the Palestinians will begin setting up a mechanism for coordinating positions between them in preparation for the final stage talks.

Inter-Arab: Libyan Minister Raises Sanctions Issue at Transport Meeting

NC1505151596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1425 GMT 15 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 15 May (MENA)—'Izz-al-Din al-Hinshari, secretary of the General People's Committee for Communication and Transport in the Libyan Jamahiriyah and head of Libya's delegation to the conference of the Arab Transport Ministers Executive Bureau, told reporters today that Libya has submitted a memorandum to the Executive Bureau urging the UN Security Council to lift its unjust siege on the Libyan people.

Al-Hinshari said that the Executive Bureau agreed to include the Libyan memorandum on its agenda, apprise itself of it, submit it to the next meeting of the Arab Transport Ministers Council, and adopt a position supporting Libya.

The Libyan communication and transport secretary explained that the Libyan people have suffered tremendous damage as a result of the embargo and that all Libyan means of transport and communication have suffered losses as a result, particularly in view of the shortage of vehicle and aircraft spare parts.

Noting the importance of transport to economic development, al-Hinshari said that the Arab transport ministers are adopting a position supportive of Libya in view of the economic, social, agricultural, and industrial losses it is suffering.

He added that the losses are not limited to the Libyan people, but also affect neighboring countries. Reemphasizing the importance of transport to economic development, he called for greater linkage of Arab road networks. He urged the establishment of powerful Arab transport companies to assert the value of Arab transport over international competitors. He said that Arab countries face major challenges as a result of GATT.

He said that Libya backs the agreement on the unified Arab transport document, noting that it signed the agreement pertaining to it and that it was later ratified by the Libyan basic people's congresses.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Said To Suffer 'Minor Stroke' Earlier This Week

TA1605172096 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 16 May 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian Authority [PA] leader Yasir 'Arafat suffered a minor stroke earlier this week. He is suffering from fatigue, which has inhibited his daily activities. 'Arafat's health deteriorated during his visit to Cairo on 12 May, and he was rushed for medical treatment immediately after a joint news conference with Mubarak and King Husayn.

Speaking to our correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen, Israeli political sources expressed their apprehension about 'Arafat's ability to function in the near future.

Reacting to the report, PA officials said 'Arafat has a serious case of the flu and fatigue due to exhaustive work.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Arrives in Ramallah From Nabulus

JN1605201796 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 16 May 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat arrived in the city of Ramallah from Nabulus Governorate this afternoon. He was received at the Ramallah Governorate headquarters by Ramallah and al-Birah Governor Mustafa 'Isa, several ministers, representatives of national and popular forces and institutions, security officials, and a large crowd of governorate residents.

The president then headed for the Ministry of Education. He is scheduled to hold a series of meetings with senior National Authority officials, receive citizens, and inspect work at the governorate and the performance of various National Authority offices to ensure that citizens are being served in the best possible manner.

President 'Arafat received several foreign consuls accredited with the National Authority in Nabulus. He discussed the latest political developments in light of the start of the final-status talks and the Israeli siege, which has produced devastating economic effects.

President 'Arafat also received a number of leading figures of the city. During this meeting, he spoke about the strength of Palestine's Arab ties. He said he values

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

the positions of some Arab states and their financial, political, and moral support for the Palestinian people.

With regard to Israeli elections, President 'Arafat asserted that the Palestinian side will not interfere in these elections, because they are a domestic Israeli affair.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat To Meet Officials, Citizens in Ramallah 17 May

JN1705090896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] During his inspection tour of the Palestinian governorates, which has taken him to Bethlehem and Nabulus, President Yasir 'Arafat will meet with officials and citizens in Ramallah and al-Birah today.

The president arrived in Ramallah from Nabulus yesterday. He was received by Mustafa 'Isa, governor of Ramallah and al-Birah; some ministers; the heads of security organs; and the representatives of the official and popular trade unions and bodies.

'Arafat met with Edward Hananiyah and Ashraf al-Kurd late last night. They discussed prospects for promoting the health services in Palestine.

During his tour of the Nabulus Governorate, the president instructed the Palestinian Agriculture Ministry to purchase this season's wheat crop from farmers. He also issued instructions to build a children's library in Nabulus.

Palestinian Affairs: Jordanian 'Allegations' on Armed Infiltrators Denied

JN1605165596 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1540 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 16 May (SANA)—Palestinian sources in Damascus denied Jordanian allegations on the infiltration of armed Palestinian groups from Syria to Jordan to carry out operations against Israeli tourists.

The sources told the Kuwaiti paper AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM that the report is unfounded and has been completely rejected. The sources said the report is designed to harm Syria.

The sources said that the Palestinian groups do not need to resort to such acts because personnel and weapons are abundantly available in Jordan.

The sources said that the Jordanian allegations are part of the pressure being applied by others against Damascus to make it change its stands at the peace negotiations.

The same sources indicated that Amman has concluded more than one defense pact with Israel and has allowed the U.S. aircraft to use Jordanian airports. Amman is now trying to open lines of communication with Turkey. The sources said: We are not amazed by leaks and allegations like this by Jordan.

Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council Discusses Reports; 'Arafat Attends

JN1605202996 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 16 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] In Bethlehem this evening, the Legislative Council resumed its session, which is devoted to discussing the reports submitted by its committees. It will discuss the remaining papers and proposals submitted by the 11 council committees.

During the morning session, which was concluded this afternoon, the deputies discussed the reports submitted by the refugees, political, natural resources, economic, and public scrutiny committees.

In a vote on a paper submitted by the Refugees Committee, the council unanimously endorsed efforts to guarantee the Palestinian refugees' right to repatriation and to continue the ongoing negotiations to uphold this right. The council also approved efforts to activate national dialogue to promote political pluralism and the rule of law.

The deliberations were interrupted by remarks by the deputies. Democracy prevailed during the council meetings.

At the outset of the morning session, the council endorsed the work mechanisms of the various committees. It pointed out that the committees' headquarters are at the permanent headquarters of the Legislative Council in Jerusalem, but their temporary offices will be in Gaza and Ramallah Governorates.

The council also ruled that it must endorse all the treaties that could be signed by the executive authority. Such treaties will not take effect unless the council endorses them. The council also approved a bill stipulating that it must review all the economic agreements signed by the executive authority. Council committees will submit recommendations on such agreements.

Several suggestions were made to the Legislative Council by citizens, including one regarding a debate on the overall state of affairs of the rural areas in the Governorates of Ramallah and Bethlehem.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

The services bureau of the al-Duhayshah camp and the national committee in the camp submitted a memorandum on the general situation in the camp. They asked that the electricity problem in the camp be solved and that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency reconsider the policy of reducing the services to citizens, create jobs inside and outside the camp, and grant the camp a land tract to be used to construct institutions. The Ministry of Health was asked to complete the construction of a hospital in the camp.

The Legislative Council is expected to discuss these proposals, among other issues, once deliberations on the committee reports are completed. [video shows 'Arafat walking into the meeting hall, waving at people, then sitting and taking notes during the meeting]

Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council Ends Meetings in Bethlehem 16 May

JN1705102496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 16 May 96

[Report by Sa'id 'Ayyad in Bethlehem]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Legislative Council ended its two-day meetings in Bethlehem a short while ago. During its evening session, the council discussed many proposals on the work of various committees. It postponed discussions on two papers submitted by the Security and Interior Committee and the Education and Social Affairs Committee.

The council discussed in detail a draft resolution submitted by Deputy Ziyad Abu-Zayyad on the occupation authorities' policy regarding the demolition of people's houses in occupied Jerusalem and other Palestinian territories. Abu-Zayyad urged the council to take the necessary measures quickly, so the Israeli authorities will stop the demolition of houses and cancel all decisions made in this regard.

The council members toured many areas in the Bethlehem Governorate this afternoon. They learned about Israeli violations in the form of building bypass roads and expanding settlements.

Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray' said that the bypass roads are illegal. He urged the council to raise its voice and warn against the repercussions of these roads. He also stressed the need for the council members to visit Palestinian cities in order to interact with the citizens and follow up on Israeli violations.

Quray' briefed the council on many issues and memorandums it received, including a message from Chief Qadi Qusayy al-'Abadilah, a message from the head of the Statistics Department, and a message from the al-Bahr Company on conducting a census.

The Legislative Council examined the effects of cutting power supplies to parts of Gaza Governorates. It received a complaint from citizens in the central area of Gaza on the need to build two schools in the area.

The council also discussed the draft constitutional law and decided to discuss it in detail in the next session. Quray' said: We consider constitutional law as the yardstick of the draft laws which will be deliberated by the council. There is a trend toward publishing the draft constitutional law in the Palestinian newspapers, a Jordanian newspaper, an Egyptian newspaper, and a London-based newspaper.

Nahid al-Kayyis, second deputy speaker of the Legislative Council, urged Quray' to take measures to secure the freedom of movement for the council members who are harassed by the occupation authorities.

Quray' pointed out that Israel is trying to harm and impede the council's work. The council decided to hold upcoming meetings at its headquarters in Gaza and Ramallah, except in extraordinary cases. The Legislative Council's next meetings will be held in Ramallah next week.

Palestinian Affairs: Official Denies Fatah Behind Intifadah Leaflet

TA1605152696 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 15 May 96 p 8

[FBIS Translated Text] Ramallah — Hatim 'Abd-al-Qadir, secretary of the Legislative Council's Jerusalem Committee, denied reports by the Israeli news media that Fatah was behind the distribution of a leaflet calling for the renewal of the intifadah in the holy city.

He said that the talk is about forming popular committees to defend the Arabism of Jerusalem and about confronting Israeli practices aimed at imposing a fait accompli that would prejudice the city's final status.

He added: We consider it our duty to embark on practical steps to impose the Palestinian presence and prevent Israel from acting unilaterally with regard to the future of Jerusalem.

'Abd-al-Qadir said that these committees will try to realize their aims through available popular and legal means, without violence and demagoguery, by activating the role of the masses which has been marginal to date.

He said that the final solution talks, which will determine the fate of Jerusalem, have started and they need popular backing. We will not sit idle throughout the negotiations, which might last three years.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

He explained that the task of these popular — not political or factional — committees is to carry out a series of steps that will enhance the steadfastness of the residents, such as repairing old houses, resisting the phenomenon of rising rents, addressing the issue of the taxes imposed on the residents, providing financial and moral support to Palestinian institutions in the city, confronting settlement activity, attempting to curb the phenomenon of citizenship acquisition, struggling against the siege, and so forth.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: No Agreement on Functions of Monitoring Committee Reached

JN1605132596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington—The representatives of the states participating in the monitoring committee that was established as part of the April understanding will meet again today.

The representatives ended a six-hour session at the U.S. State Department last night. Diplomats said the participants could not reach an agreement on the functions of the committee.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said that the recent understanding paved the way for resuming the Middle East peace process. In testimony before the allocations subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives, Christopher said that he is determined to prevent the recurrence of violence and threats to civilians. He said: This is a to continue the peace process, and we will work to boost the peace negotiations in the Middle East.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Egypt

Egypt: Musa Comments on Visit of China's Jiang Zemin

NC1605190796 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1742 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 16 May (MENA)—Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa described the results of Chinese President Jiang Zemin's visit to Egypt as positive.

In a statement today, Musa said the visit was good and extremely fruitful. He added that the agreements signed and the discussions that took place emphasize definite intentions to promote the economic, trade, and scientific relations between the two countries.

Musa said that in light of the stage of economic reform through which both Egypt and China are passing, Egypt wishes to benefit from the Chinese experience in this field.

Libya

Libya: Authorities Said Preparing To Expel Palestinians

NC1605135296 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1320 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Sallum, 16 May (MENA)—The six-month period Libyan revolution leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi gave the Palestinians to leave Libya ended today.

The Libyan authorities began to assemble the Palestinians in Libya in two areas in Banghazi and Tripoli. They will be expelled through the [Egyptian] al-Sallum border point after the end of the final examinations in all Libyan schools and universities.

According to eyewitnesses travelling from Libya via al-Sallum, the Libyan authorities are now reorganizing the camps they put up last year in the buffer zone on the Libyan-Egyptian border, near the Libyan border point of Musa'id. Some 240 Palestinians deported by Libya last year are already living in the camp.

Libya: International Muslim Conference Urges Action Against U.S.

LD1705101696 Tripoli JANA in English
0841 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Banghazi, Al-Maa [May] 17, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — The general conference of the Islamic World People's Command has concluded the activities of its emergency session which was held in the city of Banghazi on the 14th and 15th of the current month.

At the end of the session the conference issued a series of resolutions and recommendations reaffirming the need to awaken Muslims throughout the world for the support of the Great Jamahiriyah in its confrontation for the [word indistinct] hostile designs, and the mobilization of all Muslims to counter the malignant crusader campaign which is led by America against Islam and Muslims and particularly against the Great Jamahiriyah which leads the process of confrontation and the defence of Islam and Muslims.

The Islamic parties, organizations and institutions members of the general conference of the Islamic World Peoples Command addressed a warning to America alerting on the consequences on any aggression against the Great Jamahiriyah.

The Islamic World People's Command announced at the end of the emergency session of its general conference held in Banghazi: The general mobilization within the ranks of millions of Muslims to confront America in the battlefield and everywhere in case it insists not to back down from its aggressive policies and designs against the Great Jamahiriyah. More than 120 Islamic parties, organizations and institutions from various geographic groups of the Islamic world, the Arab homeland, Asia, Africa, Europe and the two Americas, members of the general conference of the Islamic World People's Command have decided the formation of human shields of millions of Muslims to picket the site of the tunnel which regulates the flow of water from the great man-made river network to the farms in the Plains of Jafara which lies in the mountainous series of Terhuna, to confront American aggressive threats.

Members of the general conference, with all its parties organizations and institutions, pledged to intensify their efforts towards the strengthening of Muslim groups, the blacks, the Hispanic communities and the indigenous population of America to enable them to acquire power and effective ability to influence decision making in America and enable them preserve their rights and assert their cultural entities.

The conference also decided to act with intensity towards the restoration of the effectiveness of the Shura system and the adoption of the Islamic resolution which supports Muslim causes and supports all causes of right, justice and peace.

The oppressive aggressors are never afraid of resolutions issued from the palaces of rulers because these palaces were built by them and it is they who installed those rulers but they are afraid of the resolutions by the masses.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

The conference also decided to mobilize international public opinion and mobilize millions of Muslims to counter the American aggressive policies against the Great Jamahiriyah, and the need to highlight the dangers of such aggressive policies on the future of the world as a whole.

The conference also decided to form a committee from amongst its members to contact and liaise with international human rights organizations, the United Nations, the Arab League, the Islamic Conference Organization to shoulder their responsibilities towards the aggressive American policies against the Great Jamahiriyah and the actions required to stop it as that is considered oppressive terrorist acts which threaten international peace and security.

The conference also decided the establishment of a financial fund under the supervision of the Islamic World Peoples Command in order that every Muslim contributes and donates towards the support and financing of the cultural, educational, economic and jihad programmes. The general secretariat of the Islamic World People's Command was assigned to take all necessary measures in these directions. Members of the conference pledged to launch a campaign to instigate billion Muslims to contribute in the fund.

The conference also decided to launch a campaign to boycott American products and boycott Israeli enemy products and to refuse any services or facilities for the various American transport means in the airports and sea ports of Islamic states.

The conference also decided to defend the Great Jamahiriyah positions against the American threats and to manipulate Islamic media in America and the Islamic world towards that end and to expose the reality of American tyranny [word indistinct] terrorizes smaller nations and interferes in their affairs.

The conference also decided the coordination of positions with the forces which reject American aggressive policies with the [word indistinct] of countering these policies and confronting them.

The conference confirmed that being loyal to America and turning a blind eye to its repeated and deliberate insults to Islam and Muslims and its continued interference in their affairs is something which is considered counter-Islamic and undermines faith and [words indistinct] for the enemies of God.

In respect of the Palestinian cause the delegates called on the governments of those countries which accommodate Palestinian refugees to enable them return to their homeland of Palestine and [word indistinct] force them towards the return. Any blocking for the Palestinian return amounts to treason and contribution in the implementation of the American Zionist plot aiming at the consolidation of the Israeli enemy occupation of Arab Muslim Palestine and the desecration of Islamic holy places there.

Members of the general conference of the Islamic World People's Command pledged to [word indistinct] their support for the struggle of the Palestinian people to enable them liberate their land and counter Israeli terrorism which is infinitely supported by America.

Members of the conference confirmed that the recent aggression against the Arab Lebanese people has been a deliberate Israeli aggression with American financing and support as it claimed hundreds of children, women and elderly in horrible crimes and massacres, the worst of which was the village of Qana, in one of the quarters of the United Nations and under its flag. This aggression is one of the products of the submissive and defeatist conference of Sharm al Shaykh which gave the Israeli enemy the green light to kill, massacre or render homeless our Muslim brothers under the eyes of the whole world and with total silence by Arab rulers who signed the agreements of submission and humiliation for the Zionists.

The conference announced that it will resume its efforts within the pattern of the Islamic World People's Command towards stopping the bloodshed in Afghanistan and Somalia. It will also act to liaise with fighting actions in both countries to achieve that goal. The conference (?instructed) the executive bureau to take all necessary measures to dispatch a high level delegation to Afghanistan and Somalia for that purpose.

The conference reaffirmed its past resolutions and positions regarding Kashmir, Bangsa Moro [as received], Azerbaijan, Tajakistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, Abkhazia, Kosovo and Macedonia. The conference appealed to all Islamic organizations, parties and institutions to support Muslims in these areas to acquire their rights and counter the threats facing them.

The conference confirmed the need to mobilize all Islamic energies to confront the forces that are aggressive towards Islam and Muslims and the forces that want to dominate the Islamic world and steal its wealth and its resources.

Libya: Millions of Muslims To Mobilize Public Opinion Against U.S.

LD1605123696 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1126 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Banghazi, 16 May — The Islamic bodies, institutions, and parties — members

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

of the General Congress of the International Islamic Popular Command — have decided to deploy millions of Muslims from all over the world to mobilize world public opinion in order to confront the repeated U.S. aggressive and terrorist threats against Libya, because these threats are based on false claims and pretexts that constitute a threat to the security and peace of the whole world.

That was stated in the final communique of the urgent meeting of the General Congress of the International Islamic Popular Command, which was issued in Banghazi.

Libya: Human Shield To Form To Protect Tarhunah Tunnel

LD1605121596 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1120 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Banghazi, 16 May — Two hundred and twenty Islamic bodies, institutions, parties and prominent figures from the geographic groups of the Islamic world, the Arab homeland, Asia, Africa, Europe and the two Americas, members of the International Islamic Popular Command, have decided to form a human shield made up of millions of Muslims to be deployed at the site of the tunnel used for regulating the flow of water from the Great-Man-Made River to farms in the Al Jifarah valley in the Tarhunah Mountain range. This will be done to confront the U.S. aggressive threats to drop atomic bombs on the tunnel.

That was stated in the final communique issued at the end of the urgent meeting of the General Congress of the International Islamic Popular Command, held in Banghazi on 14 and 15 May.

Morocco

Morocco: Minister, UN Representative Discuss Western Sahara

LD1705085496 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The minister of state for the interior [Driss Basri] yesterday held talks with Erik Jensen, deputy special representative of the UN secretary general, who visited Rabat within the framework of his tour of the region, after the UN secretary general had handed in a report to the Security Council, in which he decided to suspend the activities of the voter identification commission.

During the meeting, Driss Basri stressed that the Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] was fully responsible for the deadlock on the referendum. From the beginning, the Polisario has ceaselessly put obstacles and hindrances in the way in order to lead the referendum issue to the deadlock that it has reached.

After giving a reminder of Morocco's strong adherence to the clauses of the resolution plan, which is irrevocable, the interior minister said that the Moroccan authorities had not failed to give their continuous support during all the stages of the voter identification operation in order to facilitate Minurso [United Nations Mission for the Organization of a referendum in Western Sahara], and put themselves at all times under the UN orders to resume the issue, which the adversaries of our territorial unity are seeking to undermine.

Sudan

Sudan: Minister Does Not Rule Out War With Eritrea

NC1605123496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 16 May (MENA)—Dr. al-Tayyib Ibrahim Khayr, Sudanese minister of information and culture, does not rule out war between Sudan and Eritrea in September, according to press reports on the possibility of war between the two with Ugandan-Ethiopian support for Eritrea. In a statement to the Sudanese nongovernmental paper AL-RA'Y AL-AKHAR published today, Khayr said anything is expected from Eritrea in light of an examination of its government's behavior.

Khayr stressed his country's ability to defend itself against external threats. He called on the Eritrean Government to avoid angering Sudan. Denouncing Eritrea's attitude toward Sudan, he expressed his surprise at Eritrea's behavior—severing its ties with Sudan for no reason, sheltering opponents and rebels, and attacking Sudanese border points, as well as Eritrean President Afworki's announcing that he will continue his efforts to overthrow the Sudanese Government. Khayr said he doubts Eritrea's ability to open more than one front at the same time without support from other forces, particularly in view of its tense relations with Yemen. He noted that Israel supports Eritrea.

Sudan: Another Rebel Leader Signs Peace Deal With Government

EA1605211396 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in English 1800 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The vice president of the Republic, Police Major General George Kongor Arop, attended the ceremony of the signing of the political [peace] charter by the second in command [to Lam Akol

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Ajawin], James Othow of the SPLA [Sudan Peoples Liberation Army] united faction. The ceremony, which took place at the Friendship Hall, was addressed by the vice president of the Republic who reiterated the call to Lam Akol and John Garang to join the peace efforts. The occasion was attended by the secretary general of the supreme council for peace, Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, and the king [reth] of the Shilluk tribe.

Sudan: South Africa Bans Arms Sale to Sudan

NC1605134596 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 12 May 96 p 4

[From "The Brothers' Page"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Government of South Africa has decided to impose a ban on arms sale to the Sudanese Government. The decision has been made in view of the raging civil war in southern Sudan.

It should be recalled that there was close military cooperation between the former racist regime in South Africa and the al-Turabi regime in Sudan.

Western Sahara

Western Sahara: President Abdelaziz Sends Message to UN Security Council

LD1605175796 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The recent report presented by the UN secretary general on Western Sahara is bound to freeze the serious efforts to find a political solution to the existing conflict between Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] and Morocco.

This statement is included in a message that Saharan President Mohamed Abdelaziz sent to the current president of the UN Security Council.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Qatar

Qatar: Trade Ties With Iran Intensified

96P50082A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 May 96 p 4

Report from Doha by Muhammad al-Makki Ahmad

[FBIS Translated Text] The Qatari-Iranian Joint Commission convened a meeting in Mashhad led by Qatari Minister of Finance, Economy and Trade Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani and Iranian Minister of Energy Bijan Namdar-Zangeneh.

The Qatari News Agency reported that the commission examined, the day before yesterday, aspects of cooperation between the two countries in the areas of commercial and customs exchange and other technical areas.

It was mentioned that last week Qatar and Iran agreed to remove obstacles to the flow of goods between the two countries and to open Iranian air space to Qatari Airlines. This came as a result of meetings held in Doha and headed by the Qatari director general of customs administration, Shaykh Hamad Bin-Faysal Al Thani and the deputy governor of Bushehr, Vajihollah Aqatadin.

Shaykh Hamad Bin-Faysal Al Thani stated that the two countries had decided "to grant the necessary facilities for goods in transit to the Islamic Republic of Iran and even to initiate the removal of customs duties; this, in addition to an agreement concerning fees on Iranian ships and navigation from Qatari ports that eliminates any obstacles."

The Doha meeting included the recommendation that the customs directors from Qatar and Iran facilitate "the entry and departure of Iranian ships at all times, thus offering them freedom of movement to and from Qatari ports."

The two sides also agreed upon "a number of proposals, including information exchanges to counter smuggling and commercial fraud, as well as exchanges of statistical information and expertise in the area of customs training."

The meeting also recommended "efforts to open Iranian air space to Qatari Airlines, to innaugurate flights from Doha to the Bushehr airport, to utilize the southern Iranian airports to transship Qatari exports, and to find all means possible for facilitating the flow of goods in transit to the independent Islamic republics in Central Asia by way of Iranian ports."

United Arab Emirates

UAE: Shaykh Zayid Said Ready To Aid Lebanon

NC1605174196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri held talks with Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates, in Abu Dhabi this morning. The Emirian president expressed indignation at the recent Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

Al-Hariri said Shaykh Zayid expressed his readiness to assist and support Lebanon and gave relevant instruction to Deputy Prime Minister Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid. At a press conference, al-Hariri said: We will demand compensation for the damage inflicted on the electricity, water, telephone, roads, and other sectors. He urged all sides to offer assistance through the Higher Relief Committee, which is now supervising the provision of aid to those harmed by the Israeli aggression. Al-Hariri reaffirmed that the Lebanese Army and the other legitimate forces are capable of maintaining security in the south in the case of an Israeli withdrawal. [passage omitted]

UAE: Lebanon's al-Hariri Holds News Conference in Abu Dhabi

JN1605175496 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1300 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 16 May (WAKH)—Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri praised the firm and principled support of His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE] for Lebanon.

At a news conference in Abu Dhabi today, al-Hariri said that the UAE president expressed his readiness to help and support the Lebanese people. He noted that Lebanon has presented a proposal to the European, Arab, and other states to grant it $5 billion.

He said: Lebanon is aware of the current circumstances of the Arab states in general and the Gulf states in particular following the developments in the region. We presume that it is not just the Arab states that should assume the responsibility of helping Lebanon execute its reconstruction plan, but also the United States, Europe, and Japan.

Al-Hariri rejected the idea of establishing a fund to receive the required aid to Lebanon, saying: We will directly deal with the states that will extend aid to Lebanon. We have the organizations that can deal with the donor states and funds in accordance with their own systems.

He added that the losses inflicted on Lebanon as a result of the recent Israeli aggression are incalculable, noting

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

that the April understanding stipulates the formation of an advisory group to help reconstruct Lebanon.

He expressed the belief that the April understanding will hold because its sponsors are efficient states that are capable of imposing respect for the understanding and that respect their obligations. This is in addition to the fact that the resumption of fighting and the expansion of aggression are not in the interest of the parties concerned, especially since the recent aggression proved that all sides emerged losers.

He stressed that since the beginning of the cease-fire, the Lebanese Government has focused on extending aid to the citizens in south Lebanon to bolster their steadfastness. He said that immediately following the cease-fire, the citizens began to return to the south, but a large number of them did not return to their homes. He said that the state's resources are limited.

Al-Hariri called on all quarters in Lebanon to extend aid through the Lebanese state, stressing that the state will not allow anyone to benefit from these circumstances at its expense.

Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri confirmed that parliamentary elections will be held on schedule. He denied any plan to extend the mandate of the current Chamber of Deputies and urged all factions and parties in Lebanon to participate in the upcoming elections.

Commenting on U.S. credibility toward peace in the region, al-Hariri said the United States is sincere in its efforts to achieve peace in the region. In addition, the United States has an interest in achieving stability in the region. He added that trying to bypass or disregard the U.S. role in the region is impossible. He stressed the need to face reality. Europe cannot be a substitute for the United States. The Europeans are not proposing to replace the United States. However, they can help.

The Lebanese prime minister said some Arab countries have no interest in establishing relations with Israel. He said: This will harm our interests, and there is no reason to rush. We do not understand why there is a rush. Commenting on Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' statement that he does not want UN forces to be deployed in southern Lebanon, al-Hariri said: Peres is governed by the Israeli elections. He added that the Israelis spoke publicly about canceling Lebanon's financial and economic role in the region during the aggression against Lebanon. He said Lebanon emerged from the aggression with more stability as a result of the national unity that was manifested during and after the aggression. Al-Hariri said investments in Lebanon are increasing, especially since Lebanon has received Arab and international assistance.

Responding to Israeli allegations that Israel will not withdraw from the south because the Lebanese state cannot extend its authority to the south, al-Hariri said the Lebanese state is fully capable of maintaining security and order in the south once Israel withdraws. Lebanon has 55,000 soldiers and 15,000 internal security troops who can maintain security, he said.

UAE: PRC Vice Premier Arrives for Talks

JN1605210096 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1900 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 16 May (WAKH) — PRC Vice Premier Wu Bangguo arrived in Abu Dhabi this evening on a visit to the United Arab Emirates that will last several days. The PRC vice premier will hold talks with High Highness Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, deputy prime minister, on bilateral ties, issues of mutual interest, and developments in the Middle East.

Yemen

Yemen: Foreign Minister, PRC Vice Premier Hold Talks

JN1605172296 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, received PRC Vice Premier Wu Bangguo and his delegation, who are visiting our country. Al-Iryani and Wu Bangguo discussed bilateral relations and ways to promote and enhance them in the various fields. They also reviewed a number of issues of mutual concern, developments on the regional and international arenas, and the situation in the Middle East.

The meeting was attended by brothers 'Abduh 'Ali 'Abd-al-Rahman, the deputy foreign minister; Ghalib 'Ali Jamil, Foreign Ministry undersecretary for political affairs; and (Shi Biocbing Che), the Chinese ambassador in Sanaa.

Yemen: House Speaker, PRC Vice Premier View Bilateral Cooperation

JN1605155696 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother al-Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the House of Representatives, today received PRC Vice President Wu Bangguo and his delegation, who are currently visiting our country. They reviewed bilateral cooperation and ways to promote and enhance relations in the interest of the two friendly peoples.

The brother speaker of the House of Representatives thanked the friendly PRC for its support to our country, particularly in building roads and extending medical and other kinds of assistance. He alluded to the long-standing Yemeni-Chinese relations and expressed our

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

country's desire to promote bilateral cooperation. He welcomed the joint investment ventures between the two countries, emphasizing the opportunities provided by the Yemeni law on investments.

The Chinese official said that his visit to our country comes within this context, and that the agreements signed between the two states will contribute significantly toward opening new areas of cooperation. The Chinese official conveyed to the brother speaker of the House of Representatives greetings from his Chinese counterpart and his wishes that bilateral parliamentary relations will prosper.

The meeting was attended by Ambassador Isma'il al-Nu'mani; the adviser to the minister of industry, oil, and mineral resources, who is supervising the escort committee; and the Chinese ambassador in Sanaa.

Yemen: Cooperation, Aid Agreement Signed With PRC Delegation

JN1605144896 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An economic and technical cooperation agreement between our country and the PRC was signed at the Ministry of Planning and Development today. The agreement is aimed at promoting bilateral ties and enhancing bilateral economic and technical cooperation in various areas. According to the agreement, the PRC Government will grant our country a total of 30-million yuan in aid. The grant will be used to implement the economic and technical cooperation projects agreed upon by the two states.

The agreement was signed by Dr. Mutahhar 'Abdallah al-Sa'idi, Yemen's deputy minister of planning and development, and Gu Yongjiang, China's assistant minister of foreign economic relations and trade.

The signing ceremony was attended by brother 'Abd-al-Qadir Ba-Jammal, deputy prime minister and minister of planning and development, several officials of the Ministry of Planning, PRC Vice Premier Wu Bangguo, and PRC Ambassador in Sanaa (Shi Bioching Che).

Yemen: PRC Vice Premier Meets President Salih, Leaves Sanaa

JN1605195596 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, received a PRC delegation at the Republican Palace today. The PRC delegation is led by Vice Premier Wu Bangguo. The PRC official conveyed greetings from the PRC leadership to the president and wishes of continued progress and prosperity for the Yemeni people. The meeting participants reviewed ways to enhance bilateral ties and cooperation. The participants also exchanged views on many international issues and developments of mutual concern. [passage omitted]

The brother president praised Yemeni-PRC ties, noting that they are distinguished, historical ties. He stressed Yemen's eagerness to promote these relations in economic, trade, investment, and other fields. He expressed appreciation for the PRC position, which supported Yemeni unity, and for PRC contribution to development efforts in Yemen. He said the PRC is one of the first countries to offer support for development projects in Yemen. These projects symbolize Yemeni-PRC friendship. The president stressed that Yemen supports PRC efforts for unity by peaceful means. He asked the PRC vice premier to convey greetings to the PRC leadership and president, wishing them continued good health and happiness. President Salih also wished the friendly PRC people continued progress and prosperity. [passage omitted]

The PRC vice premier and his delegation left Sanaa this evening at the conclusion of a visit to our country that lasted several days. [passage omitted]

Yemen: Cooperation Agreements Signed With Cuba

JN1605140896 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The minutes of the 13th session of the Joint Ministerial Yemeni-Cuban Committee, which met in Havana in the second half of December 1995, were signed at the Ministry of Planning and Development today. The minutes provide for promoting Yemeni-Cuban cooperation in the areas of health, construction, urban planning, education, and culture. They also call for streamlining trade ties.

Three agreements between our country and the Republic of Cuba were also signed at the Ministry of Planning and Development. These agreements address cooperation in the areas of trade, culture, and science. The minutes and agreements were signed by brother 'Abd-al-Qadir Ba-Jammal, deputy prime minister and minister of planning and development, and Cuban Ambassador (Hector Irkhelis Beri).

The signing ceremony was attended by the Yemeni ambassador in Havana, brother Dr. 'Abd-al-Da'im Mubariz; several officials in the Ministry of Planning and Development; and the staff of the Cuban Embassy in Sanaa.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iraq: Iranian Resistance Spokesman—Plot To Kill Rajavi Aborted

JN1605121296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1135 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 16 May (INA)—Hasan Nizam al-Malaki [name as transliterated], a spokesman for the Iranian Mojahedin-e Khalq organization, said a plot hatched by the Iranian regime to assassinate Mas'ud Rajavi, Mojahedin-e Khalq leader, was aborted.

In a news conference held here today, and attended by representatives from Arab and foreign news agencies and television networks, as well as INA, al-Malaki said a terrorist ring, affiliated with the Iranian regime's intelligence services was tasked with this operation. However, the attempt was foiled.

The spokesman also revealed that the Iranian regime also planned another operation against the residence of Mrs. Miriam Rajavi, the Iranian resistance president, in a Paris suburb. He said mortars and rockets were to be used in this operation. He said weapons were sent on board a ship named "Kladhadoz" [name of ship as transliterated] to a Belgian port on 14 March. However, the Belgian authorities aborted the operation.

Iraq: Assembly Speaker Receives Jordanian Ambassador

JN1605124196 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1000 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 16 May (INA)—National Assembly Speaker Sa'dun Hammadi today received Bassam Qaqish, ambassador of the fraternal Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Baghdad.

The National Assembly speaker reviewed the existing and developing brotherly ties between the two sisterly countries and their absolute belief in the need to improve and strengthen these ties. He noted the importance of strengthening ties between the representatives of the two brotherly peoples.

Dr. Hammadi stressed that Iraq is prepared for any form of cooperation with sisterly Jordan, whether on the level of exchanging visits, consultations, issuing joint statements, and any other formula that can enhance closeness and common understanding.

The Jordanian ambassador stressed that the Jordanian Government and people believe the relationship with Iraq is fateful, that this relationship is very strong on both the historical and pan-Arab levels, and that it will remain for ever.

He said he hopes the embargo imposed on the Iraqi people and the suffering of its steadfast people will end as soon as possible.

Iraq: 'Huge' Explosion Reported at Interior Ministry Building Early May

JN1605140496 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our sources said a huge explosion occurred on the sixth floor of the Interior Ministry building early this month.

The sources said that the explosion destroyed a number of offices. All employees in the building managed to escape after the explosion. The sources said that a number of officers were injured, and ambulances were seen rushing to the ministry building, which is surrounded by a group of security departments and institutes.

Our sources noted that a large number of citizens were prevented from using the street that leads to the explosion site, which is close to the International al-Sha'b Stadium.

The regime is still imposing a news blackout on the operation. A meeting was held for the ministry employees one day after the explosion during which the employees were warned against discussing details about the incidents.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Israel: Peres Reportedly Urges Arab-Western Anti-Iran Alliance

JN1605133296 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1100 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Shim'on Peres supports the establishment of an Arab-Western alliance against Iran. This idea or call was released by the Israeli prime minister in an interview published today in the Qatari newspaper AL-SHARQ. Peres was responding to a question on whether it is possible to establish such an alliance with the participation of Israel — an alliance modeled on the anti-Iraqi alliance formed during the latest Gulf war.

Peres said: This is what will eventually happen, because the Arab countries are aware that Iran, violence, and extremism are the enemies of both Israel and the Arabs. Iran constitutes a direct threat and is the main enemy of development and progress, not only to Israel, but also to the Arab world.

In the same interview, Peres called on President al-Asad to play a personal role; that is, to take part personally in the Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations in order to achieve the aspired progress on this track. Peres told the Qatari newspaper that the Americans had emphasized to him that President al-Asad will personally engage in these negotiation in the future.

Israel: Savir Foresees Coordinated International Anti-Iran Action

TA1605155896 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 16 May 96

[Telephone interview with Israeli Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir by Rafi Ginat and Mikhal Gazit; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ginat] Today it was disclosed that the terrorist who blew himself up at the Lawrence Hotel in East Jerusalem was a Hizballah recruit who was sent by Iran to do a suicide bombing, apparently on an El Al plane.

The Iranian connection is not new. The question is how Israel will exploit the discovery in Gaza of 70 terrorists sent by Iran and the terrorist who blew himself up in Jerusalem in the international arena in order to make the Americans, the United Nations, and others really harm Iran, perhaps for the first time.

[Savir] I think evidence has been accumulating recently about intense Iranian activity against the peace process through the terror coming from Lebanon, what was recently uncovered in Israel and termed by Israeli intelligence officials as an attempt to interfere with the elections, and what the Palestinian Authority [PA] uncovered as a result of the arrests it made. Similar Iranian activities have been uncovered elsewhere, and I think there is no longer any argument, not even in Europe, about Iran's designs.

The main sticking point between Europe and the United States is whether a dialogue and economic ties should be maintained with Iran in order to influence it or whether it should be boycotted, as the United States thinks. In view of the latest revelations, I foresee the possibility of a U.S.-European, and perhaps even Israeli dialogue in order to reach agreement on the facts. Then, the same Europe which maintains a dialogue with Iran can put it to the test, seeing as Iran has important economic assets at stake in its relations with Europe. Iran will then have to prove that it has definitely put an end to terrorist activity, that it does not pose a threat to the peace process in the Middle East, that it does not export its revolution through terror, or else it will pay a price in terms of its economic ties, particularly with the European countries.

[Gazit] Perhaps in the spirit of the current times, now that the facts so plainly speak for themselves, isn't there room to call for an emergency session of the UN Security Council to issue an international denunciation or perhaps to impose sanctions on Iran?

[Savir] Unfortunately, I don't believe this is realistic because of the gap I just mentioned between the EU and the United States. The latter has been engaged in a dialogue with Europe and so has Israel. The prime minister recently raised the issue with French President Chirac and in various messages to European state leaders, and the Americans have been exerting some pressure. In the wake of this evidence Europe may no longer be able to avoid changing its policy or at least challenging Iran that if this does not stop these activities then the next step may very well be a UN Security Council resolution and a different economic policy toward it. Seeing that the danger originating from this region has also spread to Europe where many Muslims live — in France, for instance — it will become imperative to put an end to it.

[Ginat] Let us move to another facet of this affair. Is the uncovering of the Iranian envoys by the Palestinian Security Service, and particularly the immediate notification of Israel, further proof of Israeli-Palestinian cooperation against terror?

[Savir] I think today there is almost full cooperation, and the reason is simple. This is not due to Israeli pressure, but due to a common interest shared by Israel and the PA which considers Iran's agents — Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] — and their terror a common threat; we share an interest in putting an end to it. I

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

would say that if these Iranian and pro-Iranian elements and their terror are a security problem for us, for the Palestinians they are a matter of life and death owing to the fact that it is meant to undermine the very essence of the Palestinian regime and the very existence of the PA. Hence the full, close, and effective cooperation; it is not surprising.

[Gazit] On the same affair, we hear that those 70 terrorists got in through Jordan. To what extent are the Jordanian security authorities aware of this danger?

[Savir] I think there is full awareness. Jordan also has an interest in the matter.

[Gazit] But nevertheless it failed to block them.

[Savir] Jordan does the best it can to block them. I think that in view of events of recent months — and to some extent this began after the bombings in Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Tel Aviv — warning bells rang both in the PA and Jordan to put up a fight. When they found deeper layers of activity inspired by Tehran they took the appropriate measures. The fight that started has been effective but is certainly not one that will end soon since this is a ruthless enemy that wants to hurt the peace process with all its might.

Israel: Security Elements View Iran Terror Efforts

TA1705085496 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 17 May 96 p 9

[Article by Steve Rodan: "Iran Seeks To Torpedo the Elections"]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Eight days ago, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres summoned his top security advisers for an emergency meeting. In attendance were the heads of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], General Security Services and Mosad.

The subject was Iran and its increasing support of terrorism.

Government experts asserted that Iran was organizing a drive by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], Islamic Jihad and Hizballah to launch a wave of terrorism that would rock Israel, undermine its election campaign and destroy the current Middle East negotiations. [passage omitted]

Intelligence sources say Iran prefers to use operatives coming from abroad who enter Israel as tourists. The sources assess that as tourists the operatives have far greater freedom than Palestinians trapped in the territories by the Israeli-imposed closure.

The sources say Iran has not been satisfied with the effectiveness of Hamas, which receives at least $1 million a year from Tehran but does not take orders from the Islamic republic.

Simply put, the sources say, Hamas in the territories has become too close to the Palestinian Authority [PA]. The political leadership no longer dares to openly defy Yasir 'Arafat. Moreover, many of Hamas' top terrorists prefer to avoid confrontation with the PA in exchange for being allowed to live quietly in Gaza or Jericho until the pressure by Israel and the U.S. for their capture eases.

The sources say that over the last six months 'Arafat sent Hamas a clear message he might do more than imprison the organization's leadership. He threatened to shut down the huge network of schools, charities, clinics, kindergartens and mosques that form Hamas' support network in Palestinian society.

"Hamas spends 90 percent of its money on aid to civilians," a senior Civil Administration officer says. "Without the civilian aid, there would be no military activities."

The officer points to a videotape that Israeli authorities seized during a raid of a Hamas nest in eastern Jerusalem. It recorded a ceremony of Arab first graders at a year-end party in a Jerusalem school.

The youngsters all wore ribbons around their heads and lined up as in a military parade. They were directed by their teachers to pose as recruits for suicide attacker.

The students chanted: "My land, drink my blood. I am going to be a martyr."

But 'Arafat seems to have withdrawn from his apparent intention to strike at Hamas institutions. Palestinian security sources say the PA chief ordered several Hamas-controlled mosques to be closed and their preachers fired. But the PA found it did not have the money to pay for their replacements and maintain the mosques.

The result was that within a few weeks the Hamas preachers, known as imams, were returned to their posts. "The effort against Hamas has been stalled," a security source says.

The sources say pressure against Hamas has eased, and security sources quietly say its militants are being released from Palestinian jails. These include Hamas members sentenced to up to five years for attacks against Israel.

"In no cases was the hard-core leadership of the terror groups tried, including through today, although many of the Hamas military wing's inner circle are currently in PA jails," a report by the non-partisan group Peace Watch says.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Palestinian security sources agree. "We don't have the money to compete with them," one source says. "The economy is getting worse, and we are feeling more resentment from the people. In such a situation, we feel that confronting Hamas would be disastrous."

Western intelligence sources say Jordan has also braked its drive against Hamas. Initially, the Hashemite kingdom responded to Israel's request and expelled at least two Hamas leaders. The Jordanians have also increased patrols along its border with Israel in an attempt to halt terrorist infiltration.

But Jordan has not shut down the Hamas infrastructure, which operates as part of the Islamic Brotherhood movement. Some Jordanian security officials feel that their previous measures against Hamas have backfired.

For example, some of the Hamas operatives who have left Jordan are now operating in Syria and, with the cooperation of the regime, are smuggling weapons and explosives into Jordan.

Moreover, intelligence sources say the recent unauthorized anti-Israel protest by thousands of Palestinians in Amman last month during Operation Grapes of Wrath has unsettled the monarchy.

"The royal palace is very sensitive to the potential unrest that could be exploited should it crack down on Hamas," an intelligence source says.

Intelligence sources say Iran has come to rely much more on Islamic Jihad operatives based in Syria, rather than Hamas within the territories, to carry out attacks. Arab sources say Palestinian allies of Iran have sent in dozens of operatives into the territories to establish a secret organization that would rival Hamas' 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam.

Unlike 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, however, the new group, commonly called Jihaz al-Siri, or secret apparatus, intends to target PA security officials, including 'Arafat himself. "The feeling is that 'Arafat has failed to deliver and he must be removed," an Arab intelligence source in London close to the Islamic Jihad says.

Quietly, however, some Palestinian and Israeli security sources are skeptical that 'Arafat is a genuine target. "This is disinformation disseminated by some PA officials to show the U.S. and Israel that the Palestinians are also facing terror," says an Arab security source, who did not want to be further identified.

Regardless, Israeli and Palestinian security sources agree that Iran and its terrorist allies are doing all they can to implement their plans to strike within the Green Line.

Intelligence operatives report daily of new alerts of terrorist attacks, particularly plans of suicide bombings and attacks on Israeli and Jewish installations abroad. These include attacks by Iran's new client, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, said to be behind this week's shooting at Bet El in which a yeshiva student was killed.

The aim, the sources say, is to show both Israel and the PA that they are helpless against Islamic terrorism, regardless of the international support they receive. Another aim, they say, is pure revenge.

"We are targets of a dirty war," Jaffee Center Director Ze'ev Ma'oz said, "a war that is both violent and psychological, a war that is aimed to kill people but also to weaken our resolve and spirit through the spread of fear and panic."

Israel: Iran Said Ordering Attacks on Israeli, Jewish, U.S. Targets

TA1705090896 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 17 May 96 p 2

[Report by Yo'av Limor]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iran has considerably stepped up its activities among terrorist organizations throughout the world in recent days, a senior political source revealed yesterday.

According to intelligence reports received by the security branches in the last few days, Iran has increased its pressure on terrorist organizations to stage attacks in Israel and against Israeli and Jewish targets throughout the world. Some reports were received from foreign intelligence agencies, primarily the American CIA. According to them, Iran has stepped up the transfer of money and arms shipments to the terrorist organizations so that they may stage attacks in the near future.

The foreign intelligence reports also indicate that the Iranians' purpose is to undermine Shim'on Peres and the Labor Party in the elections.

The political source revealed that the Iranians also ordered the terrorist organizations to attempt to stage attacks against U.S. targets around the world because of the U.S. relations with Israel. "The Americans treat these warnings very seriously, and they have significantly increased security arrangements around their interests all over the world," the source disclosed. The Israeli Foreign Ministry and security branches have also considerably increased security arrangements around Israeli and Jewish institutions all over the world.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Israel: Peres Clarifies Lebanon Agreement, Rejects Iran's Denials

TA1705095696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has said that in the talks on the agreement of understandings in south Lebanon, it has been agreed that the supervising delegations will be headed by military men. At the same time, Mr. Peres stressed that Syrian officers will not be able to enter Israeli territory, and if a tour is held on our side of the border, it will be held by the Americans and the French, accompanied by Israeli army personnel.

It was also agreed that, if a supervisors' tour is held on Syrian or Lebanese territory, Syrian officers will accompany the supervisors. Our correspondent Shula Schmerling reports that Mr. Peres spoke to reporters during a tour of the township of Nesher, near Haifa, this morning.

The prime minister noted that the terrorist who blew himself up in an East Jerusalem hotel last month was undoubtedly sent by Iran and Hizballah, and the Iranian denials are mere lip service. There is no doubt that the Iranians are trying to disrupt the Israeli elections and the peace process in every possible way. The prime minister added that over the past two weeks there were numerous warnings, and the security forces took many measures.

Israel: Peres Offers 3 Permanent Borders, Referendum on All Accords

TA1705102296 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 May 96 p A5

[Report by Shahar Ilan]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has raised a new offer for the permanent arrangement with the Palestinians, according to which there will be three borders between Israel and the territories — a political border, a security border, and an economic border. According to Peres, he would not like to draw the borderlines at this time, but they "will not be identical." Peres made the remarks in an interview with Rabbi Mikha'el Malki'or, chairman of the Memad organ, and reporter Yisra'el Walman.

"I believe," Peres said, "that all the settlements can remain in place. I see no special reason why the Jewish enclave in Hebron should be evacuated, even in the framework of the permanent arrangement. If they do not provoke anyone, why should they not be able to stay there?"

Peres added: "The problem is not the settlers or the settlements, but their Levingerization, the constant provocations. It is really difficult to live an orderly life under such circumstances. A change of attitude is called for, naturally by the Palestinians too." [passage omitted]

Peres delivered a sharp attack on the NRP [National Religious Party], which, according to Peres, in this election campaign "keeps chanting: Bibi is our messiah." At the same time, he said he is not ruling out the NRP as a coalition partner. Peres said he was happy to appoint Memad leader Rabbi Yehuda 'Amital as a cabinet minister and added that he will try to have religious ministers in his next cabinet as well.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0400 GMT on 17 May reports: "Prime Minister Shim'on Peres declared last night that if he continues to lead the country, all peace agreements reached with enemy Arab states would be brought to a referendum. The prime minister spoke at a gathering of new immigrants in Jerusalem."]

Israel: Details of Hamas 'Terror Attacks' Manual Published

TA1705082096 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 17 May 96 pp 1, 8

[Report by military correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] "A hostage should be killed immediately after his interrogation, to benefit from the information obtained from him — especially if he is an intelligence person or a soldier. He should then be buried naked, with no clothes on." This is one of a series of horrible instructions appearing in a Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] manual.

The document, obtained by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], was written by the Hamas leadership abroad for squads in the field. The document gives the squads military instructions for terror attacks. IDF sources believe that the document will be or has been distributed to Hamas squads in the Gaza Strip.

Among other things, the document says that the main principle is to make certain that the act is carried out safely, before and after the attack. It says that a scenario should be prepared for each activist in case he falls into enemy hands. Weapons seized in the operation should be examined, cleaned, and used; telescopic sights should be kept intact. At the same time, the document notes that if the enemy leaves guns behind — while withdrawing, after a demonstration, or while fleeing the scene of a terror attack — it must be treated with caution because the enemy uses various methods of booby-trapping guns or else plants electronic surveillance devices in it for later location. Such a weapon should therefore be treated with caution, examined and dismantled in a different

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

p'ace — not at the site of the activity, and from a distance, with long wires or spikes.

The document also contains a sort of basic doctrine for Hamas squads in the West Bank, mainly young and inexperienced ones.

The document notes that targets against which hand grenades should be used are people wearing a flack jacket, armored or unarmored buses, and rooms or buildings with people in them. Targets against which shoulder-fired LAW missiles or RPG's should be used are armored or unarmored vehicles, not tanks, or gathering places.

The document says that explosives from which small charges can be made should be used only against human targets. The document further describes targets and the quantity of explosives that should be used against them. For example, a charge used against civilian cars should contain 3 kg of explosives; 7 kg against civilian buses; 5 kg against military jeeps; and bombs planted inside civilian cars should be made of 200 grams of explosives. Sniper rifles should be used against stationary human targets.

The manual goes on to say that a direct clash with the enemy should be avoided, noting that it is preferable to carry out indirect attacks such as planting mines, using sniper fire, and throwing bombs or hand grenades.

In another clause, the document says that the enemy, Israel, never negotiates in kidnapping attacks. Kidnapping attacks, therefore, are to follow a specific order: A hiding place should be prepared, and security arrangements should be made for moving the kidnapped person and contacting the media; an alternative plan should be prepared; there should be a separation between the kidnapping squad and the guard squad; his picture should be taken by video or regular camera; and he should be murdered after his interrogation in order to benefit from the information he provides, especially if he is a member of the intelligence community or a soldier. He should then be buried naked. The kidnapping should be published after the person is eliminated, and 24 hours should be given to the enemy to comply with the demands, while the action squad keeps silent and no contacts are held with other elements.

Car bombs should be placed in population centers to cause as much damage as possible, the document states. Some 10 to 15 kg of explosives, reinforced with gas cylinders and gasoline containers, is enough. Attacks on strategic targets, such as an intelligence building, Defense Ministry offices, and so on, should be done with a delayed action bomb equipped with regular watches.

In another clause in the document, the terrorists are told to differentiate between big and small operations, the guideline being that a large attack should follow a small operation. For example, killing a settler is a small operation; bombing a cemetery or attacking the procession during the settler's funeral is a big operation. A small marketplace blast is small, but a big bomb that goes off in a crowded place is a big operation. A minor explosion, including concussion bombs, is small; a booby-trapped car or any other significant bomb planted at a main entrance to some facility is a big operation.

Another clause deals with alternative attacks. The document states that alternative attacks should be prepared, and the terrorists should in practice train for them. The targets should be chosen according to the damage they cause to enemy morale.

Israel: Jordanian Envoy Visits Netanyahu, Denies Peres Favored

TA1705085996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Umar al-Rifa'i, Jordanian ambassador to Israel, this morning paid a courtesy call on Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu. Answering our correspondent Yo'el Nir, the ambassador said that the Jordanian Government will work with whatever government is elected in Israel. According to him, the reports from Amman that the Royal Court prefers Shim'on Peres as Israel's prime minister are not true.

Israel: Ramallah Declared 'Closed Military Zone' for 'Arafat Visit

TA1605152096 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian Authority leader Yasir 'Arafat, who visited Nabulus this morning, is continuing is tour of the West Bank and is scheduled to visit Ramallah. Consequently, Ramallah has been declared a closed military zone.

The order declaring Nabulus a closed military zone during 'Arafat's visit to the city has been lifted, and the city is now open to Israeli traffic.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Israel: Gallup Poll Shows Peres With 6-Point Lead Over Netanyahu

TA1705095996 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 17 May 96 p 1

[Gallup poll]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Question: Were elections for the premiership held today between Shim'on Peres and Binyamin Netanyahu, for who would you vote?

Answer: Peres — 45 percent; Netanyahu — 39 percent; undecided/refuse to answer — 16 percent.

Question: If the Knesset elections were held today, for which party would you vote?

The answers are given in Knesset seats, with the number of seats in the current Knesset noted in brackets: Labor—38 (44) Likud+Tzomet+Gesher—33 (40) Meretz—7-8 (12) SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim]—4-5 (6) Moledet—4 (3) United Torah Jewry—4-5 (4) National Religious Party—7 (6) Arabs—5-6 (5) The Third Way—3 Immigrants—3-4 Do not know/undecided/will not say—7

The following question was addressed only to those undecided in the premiership elections: What do you think you will ultimately do on election day?

Answer: Will not vote at all — 19 percent; will vote for a party and cast a blank ballot for the premiership — 14 percent; will eventually vote for a party and for one of the candidates running for the premiership — 48 percent; do not know — 19 percent.

The poll was conducted on 13 and 14 May among 1,046 Israeli Jewish adults. The results incorporate the results of a previous poll of the Arab sector. The maximum margin of error is approximately 4 percent.

Israel: Dahaf Institute Poll Finds Peres With 5-Point Lead

TA1705100096 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 17 May 96 p 3

[Public opinion poll conducted by the Dahaf Institute directed by Dr. Mina Tzemah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Question: Were elections for the premiership held today and the candidates were Shim'on Peres and Binyamin Netanyahu, for whom would you vote? (Results quoted in percentage points, with results of previous poll given in brackets)

Answer: Peres — 49.6 (50); Netanyahu — 44.2 (45); undecided/ did not reply — 6.2 (5).

Question: Were elections to the Knesset held today, for which party would you vote? (Results quoted in Knesset seats, with results of previous poll given in brackets)

	Forecast seats	Current Knesset
Labor	41 (42)	44
Likud+Tzomet+Gesher	39 (40)	40
Meretz	8 (8)	12
Moledet	3 (3)	3
National Religious Party	7 (6)	6
United Torah Jewry	4 (4)	4
SHAS	5 (5)	6
HADASH	3+ (3+)	3
The Third Way	2 (2)	—
Yisra'el Ba'aliya	5 (4)	—
ADP+Islamic Movement	2+ (2+)	2 (ADP)

[Key to abbreviations: SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality]; ADP [Arab Democratic Party]

Parties that did not obtain the minimum quota are not included in the forecast.

The poll was conducted on 15 and 16 May on 1,003 respondents who constitute a representative sample of Israel's adult population. The maximum margin of error is approximately 3 percent.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Jordan: Al-Khazraji Denies Rumors of Leaving Jordan

MM1605115496 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Al-Khazraji Will Not Leave Amman"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — A source close to Staff General Nizar al-Khazraji, the former Iraqi chief of staff, has denied that al-Khazraji is thinking of leaving Jordan.

Asked by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Amman about rumors circulating in the Jordanian capital to the effect that the Jordanian Government is considering not renewing al-Khazraji's residence permit because of suspicions that he might have connections with the Iraqi Government, the source close to al-Khazraji stressed that these reports are "totally untrue and baseless." The source stressed that al-Khazraji is cooperating with the movements and figures opposed to the Iraqi regime.

Staff Gen. al-Khazraji traveled to Amman last March via Turkey after opposition Iraqi Kurdish quarters helped him move from the Iraqi areas under government control to Iraqi Kurdistan in preparation for his transfer to Jordan.

Jordan: King Calls Visit to Turkey 'Very Successful'

JN1605203996 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] With God's care and protection, His Majesty King Husayn returned home after a brief visit to the Republic of Turkey, during which his majesty held talks with his Excellency Turkish President Suleyman Demirel and senior Turkish officials.

In remarks to Jordan Television upon arrival, his majesty said that his visit was successful and that the Jordanian-Turkish relations are strong. His majesty also asserted that Jordanian and Turkish viewpoints are identical and that discussions included issues related to water and Iraq.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent Kassab Samawi] Your Majesty, at the time when Jordan is holding dialogue and contacts with Turkey to enhance regional cooperation and consolidate relations with this sisterly state, there has been talk in the region about certain alliances and strategies. What is the reality of the situation?

[Husayn] There are no alliances or strategies, and there is no justification for wasting time on such talk. Thank God, it was a successful visit, and our relations are stronger than alliances and axes. We are bound by ancient relations founded on sound principles. We are dear friends. God willing, there will be cooperation in many other areas in the future. It was a very successful visit. We spoke about all the matters that concern us and discussed all our worries about this region. Our viewpoints on the problems and challenges are identical.

[Samawi] Sir, Jordan, which plays a pivotal role, will hold the first water summit in Amman. This summit will be attended by the region's states. Turkey is an influential state with respect to concepts of security and water cooperation. Was this issue discussed, and what were the results?

[Husayn] Yes, we discussed the water issue in general. However, if the conference is convened, we need to send an invitation to our brother the Turkish president so that he can be among the participants. God willing, there will also be a conference in Ankara, or Istanbul, soon, and either I personally or my brother, Crown Prince Hasan, will participate in it. God willing, all the international conferences—actually this one will be the last—will tackle all the issues and problems, and hopefully all the results will be positive.

[Samawi] One last question. Jordan and Turkey are among the states that are directly affected by the developments in Iraq. No doubt you discussed this issue. Was there a sharing of views on this issue?

[Husayn] We share the same fears, worries, and pains. Of course we discussed this issue. God willing, all the results will be positive.

[Samawi] Thank you, sir. Welcome back. [end recording]

As for His Majesty king Husayn's brief visit to the Republic of Turkey, our correspondent Kassab Samawi has this report.

[Begin Samawi recording] The Husayn-Demirel summit today was a crowning achievement of Jordan's active diplomatic efforts—personally led by His Majesty King Husayn—in Arab, regional, and international arenas. [passage omitted]

The Jordanian and Turkish sides discussed the possibility of water cooperation. Jordan is preparing to host an international water summit next year. The two sides also discussed the tragic conditions of the Iraqi people. His Majesty King Husayn and Turkish President Demirel stressed the unity of Iraq—territories and people—as well as the need to ease the suffering of the Iraqi people so that they can restore their role in the region.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

During the meeting, His Majesty King Husayn said that Jordan hopes to see a positive Turkish role in building peace in the region and contributing to the reinforcement of cooperation among its peoples.

The Turkish side reviewed the dimensions of the military agreement concluded with Israel recently, asserting that this agreement is confined to conducting military exercises and that it does not mean that new military alliances have been formed. This agreement, the Turkish side added, does not pose a threat to the security of any party in the region. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Jordan: Recording Said To Verify Minister's Remarks on U.S. Planes

JN1605114196 Amman JORDAN TIMES (Weekender Supplement) in English 16-17 May 96 p A

[Jennifer Harmarnah column: "The Proof's in the Pudding" from the "Society on the Move" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Only a week after a national conference on journalism discussed, as one of its topic, the ethics of the profession, one controversial tabloid locked horns with Minister of Information Marwan al-Mu'ashshir. The tabloid last week, in a headline on its front page, quoted Dr. al-Mu'ashshir as saying that Jordan had asked the U.S. to fly planes over southern Iraq. When the minister protested that he was misquoted, the reporters said they had a tape recording to prove their case. Dr. al-Mu'ashshir challenged the reporters of the weekly to replay the tape at the next press briefing, which was subsequently held Monday [13 May]. Meanwhile, the paper published another headline saying that it accepted the minister's challenge and would prove him wrong. Prior to Monday's briefing Dr. al-Mu'ashshir received a call from the reporters in question admitting that the minister had not made the statement as they reported it. Dr. al-Mu'ashshir responded that he would still like them to come to the briefing and play the tape, not to aggravate the situation but to clear the matter up. The reporters agreed. At Monday's briefing, before playing the tape, the minister told the reporters present, including the unprecedented number from the tabloid in question (about 10), that generally he would not feel compelled to conduct such a test. But because his credibility should never be in doubt, and that although he may not reveal everything he knows to the press, what he does reveal should be the truth, he believed the best route to take was to have all present listen to the tape. The recording revealed that Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said, "These planes have been flying over Iraq for the last five years. The new element about this is that Jordan wanted to benefit from the U.S. training of Jordanian pilots and upgrade its facilities. Therefore, Jordan asked these planes to fly." At that, and having been proved in error, the tabloid reporters charged that the minister "meant" to say that Jordan asked for U.S. planes to fly over southern Iraq. Dr. al-Mu'ashshir returned saying that they, as journalists, have the right to say that the minister meant to say "over southern Iraq," but they do not have the right to say "the minister said over southern Iraq." Suddenly, as if on cue, the entire representation of the weekly walked out of the briefing. So much for "truth or consequences" and ethics and etiquette.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Lebanon: Buwayz Says Parties Close on Forming Monitoring Committee

NC1605164296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Representatives of the five countries concerned with the committee that will monitor the cease-fire agreement in Lebanon will meet in Washington this evening. There were optimistic indications today that the committee will be formed soon and that the various viewpoints will be reconciled. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has stressed the need for the monitoring committee to be a field committee. Choosing al-Naqurah as the headquarters of the committee, he said, would indicate that the committee is a field committee, but choosing other cities far from the scene would suggest that the purpose is not to monitor and organize the cease-fire as much as it is to hold irrelevant political talks. He added: I think we are now close to reaching a solution to this issue. Buwayz said the monitoring committee should be active, efficient, and not heavily equipped. It should also be a military committee with a military-security mission, not a political one, he said.

Minister Buwayz revealed that there were moves to turn the committee from a field security committee into a negotiating committee with some objectives different from the main one. On the possibility of the committee including ambassadors, Buwayz said: We do not object to the delegations of the other countries including ambassadors, but our delegation will not include one.

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi To Address Arab Parliamentarians in Qana 'Today'

NC1705093196 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi is scheduled to address the Arab Parliamentary Union at Qana Secondary School today. He will emphasize the need to implement Resolution 425 and for Lebanon to cling to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL]. President al-Hirawi will inspect UNIFIL's Fijian contingent and lay a wreath on the mass grave in Qana.

The motorcade of Arab parliamentarians arrived in Lebanon from Damascus at about 0930 today. It is now traveling to Qana, where the Arab Parliamentary Union will hold its closing session and issue its resolutions.

A short time ago official parliamentary and government delegations began arriving in Qana, while residents and martyrs' families began to gather in the town square near the mass grave.

Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has reiterated Lebanon's refusal to impart any political role to the cease-fire monitoring committee. He stressed Lebanese-Syrian solidarity and coordination and the unity of the two tracks to reach a comprehensive and fair peace.

In an interview with [the Syrian] paper AL-THAWRAH Birri said Israel is now seeking revenge against UNIFIL as it did against Qana's children and to lay the blame on these forces. He said Israel wants to strike out Resolution 425, not just UNIFIL. Israel is trying to annul the resolution, he said.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Syria: Information Minister on U.S. Talks, Israel-Turkey Accord

JN1605123796 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1100 GMT 16 May 96

[Report by Thana' al-Imam in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian Information Minister Dr. Muhammad Salman said that substantial progress was made on all basic issues related to the security committee [emanating from the Israeli-Lebanese April understanding], noting that it is a security-military committee, not a political committee. Asked by Radio Monte Carlo about Shim'on Peres' statements that U.S. officials said that President al-Asad would personally enter the talks. Dr. Salman said:

[Begin Salman recording] In fact, this is not new. Peres raised this in the past. There was a response to such talk, which is inaccurate and untrue. Leaders only meet when solutions are reached. Israel, so far, is still evading any substantial step in the (?peace) process. [end recording]

Dr. Salman said the statements made by [U.S. Secretary of State Warren] Christopher, in which he cast doubts on Syria's desire to achieve peace, encourage Israel to reject and circumvent a just peace and its conditions.

Hinting at the Turkish-Israeli agreement, Dr. Salman — who was speaking on the occasion of the start of SANA transmissions via satellite through AFP — said that bilateral agreements do not solve political or security problems; rather, they aggravate the complications in the region. He added that this agreement, as well as alliances of that type have their own objectives.

Syria: Minister Explains Stance on Mideast Issues

JN1605195496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the patronage of Information Minister Dr. Muhammad Salman, the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, celebrated the start of its round-the-clock external satellite transmission to various parts of the world today.

Salman attended a reception held by SANA Director General Dr. Fayiz al-Sa'igh. It was also attended by the two assistant information ministers, the head of the Press Association, the directors general of the media institutions, members of the Press Association Executive Bureau, correspondents from Arab and foreign news agencies and international television networks, and a large crowd of journalists and invitees.

The information minister delivered a speech on this occasion congratulating the SANA staff on this great achievement and thanking them for their efforts which are added to our country's great achievements.

The minister said: We have been waiting for the day that SANA begins its satellite transmission in fulfillment of its pledges to our people and wise leadership to convey Syrian words and deeds to the other countries and peoples of the world. He added: We are proud of this achievement because of the wide dissemination our pan-Arab stands will enjoy. Conveying these stands to the Arab people and to the world at large is a dire need, given that we are fighting a long struggle with the Israeli enemy, an enemy who has been able to convey and strengthen the Israeli viewpoint through Israel's advanced media and widespread reporting for many years.

Dr. Salman said: As you are aware, today we will begin transmitting via the Atlantic and Asian satellites. We will have a presence and be able to disseminate information wherever AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE reaches.

Responding to a question on the problems that block the duties of the security committee, the minister said: Substantive progress on substantive issues has been realized. Now the committee's functions are being discussed, given the fact that this committee is primarily a security and military one, rather than a political committee. We announced this stand days ago at the beginning of the talks on forming this committee.

On the connection between the elections and Shim'on Peres' remarks that he will meet with President Hafiz al-Asad, the minister said: In fact, this is nothing new. Peres has proposed this before. An answer was given to these remarks. They are neither accurate nor true, because meetings of leaders do not occur unless solutions have been reached. Right now, Israel is still avoiding any substantive moves in the peace process.

Responding to a question on the resumption of negotiations after the Israeli elections, the call made by Peres in this regard, and whether there are any new points that warrant resuming the negotiations, the information minister said: We in Syria regard peace as a strategic objective. We can never abandon this objective, no matter how hard Israel tries to create obstacles and evade a commitment to peace. We are going ahead with what can achieve peace in the region. However, peace can never be what Israel wants or in accordance with its conditions. We want a just and comprehensive peace that achieves full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

Responding to another question on the Turkish-Israeli security agreement and the Turkish response to Syria, the information minister said: You are aware that there

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

are agreements in the region. If there had been no objective, Turkey and Israel would not have signed such an agreement. Any agreement or alliance must have specific objectives. Therefore, when we see such agreements concluded in the region, we ask: Why were these agreements not signed before? What are the new hostile developments in the region that warrant such bilateral alliances? Will bilateral alliances resolve security and political problems? Of course, there are problems and there are objectives. We think such agreements and alliances will further complicate the situation in the region and can never make it any easier.

Commenting on statements by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to THE LOS ANGELES TIMES on the Syrian stance toward the peace process, Dr. Salman said: We have explained our view of these statements. President Hafiz al-Asad said peace is a strategic objective to us. He spared no effort to achieve this objective. Therefore, such statements encourage Israel to adopt a rejectionist stand. Israel does not need any encouragement to evade its responsibilities, because it always tries to circumvent all the substantive issues that can achieve peace. You have heard today and yesterday that Peres is demanding the departure of international forces from the region. The truth is that this demand is meant to dispose of the real witness to Israel's aggressive actions, especially its recent savage aggression against southern Lebanon, primarily the Qana massacre, which is the best evidence of these inhumane actions. The UN forces testified as the main witnesses, and they sustained losses, just as the Lebanese people sustained losses. All this put Israel in an embarrassing situation and prompted the United Nations to condemn it.

Syria: Al-Ahmar—U.S-Backed Aggression Failed To Achieve Aims

JN1605173996 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, met at noon today with participants in the central 49th party indoctrination course at the Higher Institute for Political Sciences. At the beginning of the meeting, Comrade al-Ahmar conveyed to the participants the warm greetings of comrade struggler Hafiz al-Asad, secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and president of the Republic. [passage omitted]

In his remarks, Comrade al-Ahmar discussed the Arab and world situation and developments and the recent tragic developments resulting from the brutal Israeli aggression against Lebanon. He stressed that this U.S.-backed aggression failed to achieve its objectives thanks to the steadfastness of the Lebanese people, the Lebanese Government, and the Lebanese resistance and thanks to Syrian-Lebanese solidarity, which is even stronger. He said this stand is based on the two sisterly countries' adherence to their rights and determination to liberate their occupied territories in the Golan to the 4 June 1967 borders and in southern Lebanon. He said that the two countries will continue full coordination in order to achieve a just, comprehensive peace that restores territories and rights to their owners and provides security, prosperity, and stability for the peoples of the region.

Comrade al-Ahmar said that the current phase requires Arabs to mobilize their efforts and bolster their resolve in line with the world developments and their repercussions on the Arab situation. [passage omitted]

Syria: Commentary—Aid to Israel Threatens World Peace

JN1605143096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 16 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The more Israel persists in its hostile policy and rejection of a just, comprehensive, peace, the more regional tension increases. Israel has used history to serve its schemes and objectives, yet it ignores historical facts that stress that the blood of the martyrs supplies the soil with nutrients and gives vigor and color to new life. Israel ignores the fact that the spirit of the future will emerge from the womb of heavy ordeals with a stronger force and a wider view. The next day, the Israeli actions, the siege on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the killing and destruction in southern Lebanon will become part of history. Consequently, history will go deep into the conscience of the individual and the nation.

The region's recent history has been characterized by a series of crimes by Israel against man and mankind, beginning with the Dayr Yasin massacre and ending with the Qana massacre. The effects of all this cannot be removed and the features of the history of the region cannot be defined without uprooting the causes of these crimes. The causes are clear. They lie in the Israeli aggression and occupation. They lie in the Israeli tendency toward hegemony and control. More precisely, they lie in an Israeli mentality driven by a mania for power and superiority.

All the peace-loving forces in the world should stress their commitment to a just, comprehensive peace, a peace based on the international legitimacy and its resolutions and the land-for-peace principle. There can be no

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

peace if the occupation and the tendency toward hegemony and control continue. There can be peace if the feeling of superiority and the ability to impose conditions continue. People with willpower and determination to restore their rights do not allow conditions to be imposed on them. Only people like this are capable of maintaining just peace. Israel should realize that the policy of aggression, force, and threatened force has no future.

The Arab nation is an ancient and proud nation. It will accept nothing less than a just, comprehensive peace. The agreements Israel signed with some Arabs have nothing to do with the aspired peace. The peace acceptable to the Arab people is the peace being called for by Syria. It is the peace of the international legitimacy, which ends the occupation, restores land and rights, and maintains present and future dignity. The Arabs are a peace-loving people. They are calling on the international community, with its nations, institutions, and organizations, to play its role by pressuring Israel to return to the international fold and to accept the international legitimacy. The aid that flows lavishly into Israel not only encourages Israel to ignore the international community and violate legitimacy and law, it also threatens world peace and security.

Syria: Israel Accused of Perpetuating 'War Machine'

JN1605170396 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English 15 May 96 p 5

[Editorial by Walid Shihadah]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It seems that Israel is bent on its policy of terrorism and violating international laws and conventions. Less than three weeks after a ceasefire reached on April 27 to halt its aggression against Lebanon, the Israeli troops resumed their attacks on the civilians in the villages close to the Israeli-occupied strip in South Lebanon. The artillery pounded those villages and the gunships fired air-to-surface missiles at those targets. With a shell every five minutes falling on the innocent civilians the attack can by no means be considered an act of self-defence as the Israelis deceive others by saying they are protecting their northern borders.

This is the Israeli war machine driven and operated by soldiers who are trained to kill Arabs and to kill every chance for peace. During the April aggression which lasted for seventeen days, the Israelis perpetrated heinous massacres in Qana and in Nabatiya and elsewhere in the steadfast South Lebanon. Investigations conducted by the United Nations have affirmed that those massacres were deliberately perpetrated, and Israel exerted efforts with U.S. assistance to block a UN resolution condemning it for such acts of barbarism and annihilation against humanity. And now while the monitoring committee's tasks and formation are still under discussion, the Israelis have resumed their bombardment of Lebanese villages, paying no heed to international legitimacy or international laws and conventions. This is the Israeli attitude ever since its inception, always unleashing aggressions against the Arabs wherever they are and disobeying the laws of the international community. In South Lebanon, the aggressions have never ceased although a ceasefire took extraordinary efforts from Syria, the United States and France and other countries which were outraged by the carnage perpetrated by the Israelis.

In the occupied Palestinian territories the closure is still imposed on the Palestinians, rendering their economies great hardships. Repeated aggression on Lebanon and harsh siege on the Palestinians have become the order of the day. And surprisingly, the U.S., the major co-sponsor of the peace process, is giving is tacit consent, and strengthening the strategic alliance with Israel, standing firm in defence of the Israeli aggressors and averting any act condemning this pampered child of the U.S., which is going to ruin any effort for peace.

Israel must understand that its aggressions, however fierce, will never break the will of the people who are adamant on liberating their land. They may kill Arabs, devastate villages and towns, but the strong resolve of the people cannot be defeated. And if the UN resolutions taken as a basis for the peace process and for its own initiative of land for peace are implemented so that the process remains on track and reaches its set goal of just peace in the region which ensures security for all and on equal footing. With this peace lies the solutions.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Rabbani Returns to Kabul After Iran, Turkmenistan Visit

LD1605193896 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, head of the Kabul administration, returned to Kabul yesterday after a three-day visit to the countries of Iran and Turkmenistan.

A Radio Message of Freedom journalist reported from Kabul City that Professor Rabbani, who went to Iran last Monday [13 May] to take part in the opening ceremony of the Sarakhs-Tedzhen-Mashhad railway, linking Central Asia with the Persian Gulf, and then to Turkmenistan, returned to Kabul yesterday, after taking part in the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] conference held in Ashgabat, capital of Turkmenistan.

According to international reports, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan have signed protocols on a gas and petroleum (?pipeline) going through Central Asia. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Comments on Talks With Government, Security

LD1705090796 Tehran IRNA in English 0834 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, May 17, IRNA — The leader of Hezb-e Eslami of Afghanistan Golboddin Hekmatyar stressed here Thursday [16 May] that his talks with Borhanoddin Rabbani's government was aimed to reach an agreement on choosing of the country's leader by the people.

He added that formation of a national army and a government ruling the entire country as well as providing Kabul's security were among other topics of discussion between the two sides.

Delegations representing the two sides are currently negotiating the subjects and have reached agreements, but final accord on formation of the government has not so far been achieved, the leader of Islamic Party added. On Kabul's security, he noted that all parties will share in providing security for the capital city adding that Hezb-e Eslami is willing to establish peace and stability throughout the country.

Afghanistan: Mojadeddi Asks ECO To Keep Afghanistan's Seat Vacant

LD1605194796 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Until a legal government is set up in Afghanistan, its seat in the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] must be kept vacant.

This point was made by Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, leader of the Nejat-e Meli [National Liberation Front], in a letter addressed to the chairman of the fourth session of the ECO conference. In expressing his opposition to Borhanoddin Rabbani's participation in the ECO session, esteemed Mojaddedi added: A strong central government has not yet been set up in Afghanistan. For this reason, the present government in Kabul is illegal and it was a mistake to invite Borhanoddin Rabbani, head of the Kabul government, to take part in the ECO session.

Esteemed Mojaddedi asked the current chairman of the conference to keep Afghanistan's seat vacant until a legal government had been set up in Afghanistan by its people.

Afghanistan: Gaylani Urges High Council To End Current Crisis

LD1605193096 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A high council should be set up in order to end the country's current crisis and to restore peace and security. The point was made in an interview by Pir Sayd Ahmad Gaylani, leader of the Mahaz-e Meli-e Eslami [National Islamic Front].

He added: In order to end the country's current crisis, we have handed over a series of proposals to the government in Kabul, which include a proposal for the convocation of the country's high council. Regarding the nature of the high council, he said: It must consist of ulema [religious experts], political figures, and all parties relevant to the issue of Afghanistan. The council should be convened under the supervision of the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] and the United Nations.

Esteemed Pir Sayd Ahmad Gaylani said: A delegation of Professor Rabbani has already agreed to this proposal. I hope that all relevant parties, including the Taleban group, will also agree to this proposal for the sake of resolving the country's crisis.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Afghanistan: Mojaddedi To Visit Dostam for Talks on Latest Developments

LD1605162296 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed Hazrat Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, leader of Jabha-e Nejat-e Melli of Afghanistan [National Liberation Front of Afghanistan], is due to visit Mazar-e Sharif for talks with 'Abdol-Rashid Dostam, leader of the Jonbesh-e Melli [National Islamic Movement].

According to international news agencies, the purpose of Hazrat Mojaddedi's visit to Mazar-e Sharif and his meeting with General Dostam is to discuss recent political and military developments in the country.

According to a report published by NAWA-E WAQT newspaper, one of the issues scheduled to be discussed is the on-going talks between the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] and Jam'iyat-e Eslami [Islamic Society]. The leaders of Jonbesh-e Melli and Nejat-e Melli will try to reach a united stance on this issue.

It should be pointed out that although talks between the Hezb-e Eslami and Jam'iyat-e Eslami have not yet reached a final conclusion, even if any conclusion is reached the final decision will be taken by the High Coordination Council in which the Jabha-e Nejat-e Melli and Jonbesh-e Melli are members.

Afghanistan: Skirmishes Break Out in Vardak Province

LD1605182496 Tehran IRNA in English 1745 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, May 16, IRNA — Skirmishes have broken out in the south and southwest of the Afghan Province of Vardak according to Afghan Defence Ministry spokeman, Amrollah, on Thursday [16 May].

Amrollah said the joint forces of the government and Hezb-e Eslami of Hekmatyar have driven the Talebans out of Daimirdad and the key town is now under control of the state and Hezb-e Eslami forces.

The spokesman reported heavy clashes in the central area of the other key town of Chaq where the joint forces of the government and the Hezb-e Eslami exchanged fire with Talebans.

Amrollah pointed out that the joint forces have planned a massive military operation to drive the Talebans from Chaq and advance to the supply route of Ghazni-Maidanshahr.

Maidanshahr is the center of Vardak Province.

Tens of people have been killed in fighting in Vardak Province of Afghanistan which started last Friday .

The Afghan Government sources stated that in the early stage of the offensive against the Taleban positions in Vardak Province, the Talebans carried out mass extermination of the local people suspected of supporting the state forces during the period their control of the two key towns of Daimirdad and Chaq.

Afghanistan: Taleban Boasts 20,000 Fighters

LD1605165296 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Taleban group is a fanatical group composed of discontented commanders and military men of the old communist regime. Some foreign sources say that, from a military point of view, Afghanistan is now divided into (?various parts). If peace is not restored in this country, the present situation will continue for a long time to come.

The source also says that the Taleban is a fanatical group which has about 20,000 fighters and which is largely made up of discontented commanders and military men from the former communist regime in Kabul. According to these reports, Pakistan has sympathy with the Taleban group.

India

India: New Prime Minister Presides Over First Cabinet Meeting

BK1605155596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister has desired that all steps should be taken to complete the election process in Jammu and Kashmir successfully. Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee was presiding over the maiden cabinet meeting of the new government in New Delhi this evening. During the hour-long meeting, which was attended by all members of the Union Council of Ministers, the prime minister and his colleagues were briefed about the security and the economic situation of the country.

Later, talking to newspersons, an official spokesman said the prime minister has recommended the portfolios of the new ministers to the president and an announcement to this effect is likely to be made by later this evening.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

India: Portfolios of New Cabinet Ministers Announced

BK1605171996 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in Hindi 1700 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Bharatiya Janata Party-Shiv Sena coalition government led by Atal Behari Vajpayee was sworn in by President Shankar Dayal Sharma at the President's House today. Prime Minister Vajpayee and 11 cabinet ministers took the oath of office and secrecy.

Sikander Bakht has been allotted the portfolio of urban development and employment. Suraj Bhan will be the new agriculture minister. Ram Jethmalani has been given the Law, Justice, and Company Affairs Ministry. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi has been made the home minister. V. Dhananjay Kumar has been given the portfolio of civil aviation and tourism. Pramod Mahajan will be defense and parliamentary affairs minister. Karia Munda will be the welfare minister. Suresh Prabhu has been assigned the Industry Ministry. Sartaj Singh has been made the health and welfare minister. Jaswant Singh will be the new finance minister. Mrs. Sushma Swaraj will be the minister for information and broadcasting.

India: World Leaders, Local Organizations Congratulate Vajpayee

BK1605164796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] World's leaders have felicitated Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee on assuming the office of the prime minister of India. In a message of good wishes to the new prime minister, the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, said he knows the depth of Mr. Vajpayee's commitment to a solid relationship between the two countries, a commitment which he also shares. In his response to Mr. Clinton, the prime minister says his government is committed to further expanding and deepening the valuable relationship between India and the United States and is looking forward to working with the U.S. President toward this end. Mr. Vajpayee said India and the United States have traditionally enjoyed friendly and cooperative ties based on many shared values and objectives. He said cooperation between the two countries has covered a large number of areas bringing the people of both the countries together for mutual benefit.

Australia also says that it will work closely with the new government. The spokesman in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said in Sydney that his government will continue to promote actively the investment opportunities in India.

King Birendra of Nepal, congratulating Mr. Vajpayee, said the experience, knowledge, and maturity of the new prime minister will lead India to new heights of prosperity.

King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan, in his message, said Mr. Vajpayee is the most eminently suited to guiding the destiny of India at a crucial juncture in its history.

The Sri Lankan president, Mrs. Chandrika Kumaratunga, now on a visit to the Japanese capital, Tokyo, said she is confident that good relations between her country and India will continue despite the change of government in New Delhi.

The Indian Newspaper Society [INS] has welcomed Mr. Vajpayee assuming the prime minister's office. In a statement in New Delhi, the INS president, Mr. B.S. Adityan, said that under the leadership of Mr. Vajpayee, the country would achieve greater heights in economic and social development.

In a statement, the National Stock Members Association said Mr. Vajpayee is an elderly statesman and has considerable experience and political administration.

The Federation of Indian Export Organization has expressed confidence that the new prime minister will continue with the economic reforms.

While congratulating Mr. Vajpayee, the Orissa chief minister, Mr. J.B. Patnaik, has expressed the hope that he will rise to the expectations of the country at this crucial hour.

India: New Prime Minister Accuses Pakistan of Kashmir Subversion

BK1605155796 Hong Kong AFP in English 1506 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, May 16 (AFP) — India's new Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee accused Pakistan on Thursday of trying to subvert upcoming general elections in Kashmir, but vowed that his Hindu nationalist government would hold them.

Vajpayee told activists at the headquarters of his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) here that Pakistan was seeking to "sabotage" the polls due in four parliamentary constituencies in Kashmir this month.

He recalled that the BJP had not supported the holding of elections in the strife-torn northern state when they were announced by outgoing prime minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

"But now that they have been decided, we will hold them," Vajpayee said to thunderous applause from some 1,000 supporters. "It is a challenge (for our new government).

"We will take whatever measures are necessary for their success," he said in his first public comments since assuming office as India's 10th prime minister earlier in the day at the presidential palace.

Two constituencies went to the polls in Kashmir on May 7 and elections are to be held in the remaining four on May 23 and May 30. The rest of the country voted on April 27, May 2 and May 3.

The pro-Hindu BJP has taken a traditionally hard line against Pakistan, with which India has fought three wars since independence in 1947. The two countries dispute the ownership of Kashmir and New Delhi accuses Islamabad of backing a Muslim insurgency in the Indian- administered portion of the divided state.

Vajpayee also said in his 30-minute speech that India's economic and security situation were worrisome. He said his 11-member cabinet met for the first time Thursday and realised that the economic scenario "was a matter of concern. "The situation on the borders is also worrisome," he added, but did not elaborate.

The BJP finished as the largest group in a hung parliament from the staggered general elections but without a majority. Vajpayee, who has been asked to prove his majority in parliament before May 31, said he would bow out office if failed to do so. "If we are not able to prove our majority by May 31, then we will withdraw ourselves and say we can't run the government," he said. "But we will strive hard to prove our majority."

India: Prime Minister Vajpayee Pays 'Courtesy Call' on Rao

BK1705091496 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 0845 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, called on the former prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, in the capital this morning. Official sources described the meeting as a courtesy call.

India: Poll Shows Vajpayee Most Popular Choice for Prime Minister

BK1605130296 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 15 May 96 p 1

[Report by K. Balakrishnan and Ravi Vyas]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Atal Behari Vajpayee of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] is the most popular choice for Prime Minister among four leading contenders, according to an opinion poll conducted in eight metropolitan cities.

Fifty per cent of the respondents to the TIMES-MODE poll preferred Mr Vajpayee over P V Narasimha Rao (31 per cent), V P Singh (11 per cent) and Jyoti Basu (8 per cent).

It is interesting to compare these ratings with those of the TIMES POLL by CMS conducted in mid-April before the elections. With the BJP emerging as the largest single party and staking its claim to form the government, Mr Vajpayee's popularity rating has shot up. From 23 per cent (equal to the BJP's share of the popular vote) it has gone up to 50 per cent, indicating that Mr Vajpayee's acceptability as a prime ministerial candidate extends beyond the BJP voters.

Mr Narasimha Rao's rating however remains at 31 per cent, the same as it was in April and equal to the Congress's share of the popular vote. His party having suffered serious losses in the elections, his ranking has now slipped below Mr Vajpayee's.

Mr Vajpayee's rating is as high as 69 per cent in Lucknow (the constituency which has returned him as MP) and 61 per cent in Delhi. He is ahead of his rivals everywhere except in Hyderabad and Madras.

Mr Narasimha Rao gets a high rating of 63 per cent in Hyderabad in his home state, against 28 per cent for Mr Vajpayee. In Madras however, surprisingly it is Mr V P Singh who scores over Mr Vajpayee and Mr Rao — he gets a rating of 36 per cent to Mr Vajpayee's 32 per cent and Mr Rao's 26 per cent. This is Mr Singh's highest rating, in all other cities his rating is 9 per cent or lower. His high popularity in Tamil Nadu is perhaps reflected in the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] leader Mr Karunanidhi's strong advocacy of Mr Singh's candidacy even though the former prime minister has ruled himself out of contention.

Mr Jyoti Basu gets a high rating of 29 per cent in Calcutta, though even there Mr Vajpayee is more favour Ed with a 36 per cent rating. Everywhere else Mr Basu gets only 7 per cent or less.

The opinion poll was conducted by MODE among 2104 adults in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Lucknow.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

TIMES MODE POLL Who should be Prime Minister?

A B Vajpayee	50 percent
P V Narasimha Rao	31 percent
V P Singh	11 percent
Jyoti Basu	8 percent

	A B Vajpayee	P V Narasimha Rao	V P Singh	Jyoti Basu
Delhi	61	25	9	5
Lucknow	69	15	9	5
Calcutta	36	26	9	29
Bombay	54	38	6	5
Ahmed-abad	58	32	4	3
Madras	32	26	36	7
Bangalore	60	25	9	5
Hyderabad	28	63	4	5

* Figures in percent

India: Left Front To Launch 'Agitation' Against BJP Government

BK1605163296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] A 12-member BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]-Shiv Sena government headed by Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee has assumed office. The president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, administered the oath of office and secrecy to the cabinet members at a simple ceremony at the Ashoka Hall of Rashtrapati Bhavan [president house] this afternoon. Mr. Vajpayee, the 11th prime minister of the country, took the oath in Hindi. [passage omitted]

In an informal chat with newspersons, the new prime minister said his government will provide a clean administration and will be sensitive to the problems and aspirations of the people. Mr. Vajpayee was confident of proving the majority of his government on the floor of the house on or before the 31st of this month. He also said that his government will go by the policy of national consensus. Later in the afternoon Mr. Vajpayee attended his South Block office.

The new prime minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has said he will expand the Council of Ministers only after winning the vote of confidence. Addressing party workers in New Delhi this evening, he said he has kept the Council of Ministers a small team and representations to various states and sections will be decided later.

The Third Front has demanded convening of the Lok Sabha session immediately. Talking to newspersons in New Delhi today, the Janata Dal spokesman, Mr. Jaipal Reddy, said the front leaders are of the view that Mr. Vajpayee should secure the vote of confidence without transacting any business in the house. He said the time given to Mr. Vajpayee is unjustified and will lead to horse trading. Mr. Reddy was briefing media persons after meeting of the Third Front leaders attended by Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda, Mr. Harkishen Singh Surjeet, Mr. Madhavrao Scindia, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav, Mr. G.K. Moopanar, and Mr. Chandrababu Naidu. A 14-member committee under the leadership of Mr. Deve Gowda is being constituted to coordinate the activities of the front partners for the next 15 days.

The Left Front will launch a nationwide agitation against the new BJP government at the center. The CPI [Communist Party of India] leader, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, announced this to newspersons in New Delhi. He said the left parties feel that the present government does not represent the will of the people and should go. The CPI, the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], the Revolutionary Socialist Party, and the Forward Bloc met to chalk out a strategy to combat the BJP in parliament and oppose any candidate it may put up as the speaker.

The Janata Dal leader, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, has said that the MP's in the Third Front led by Mr. Deve Gowda will remain intact and will vote against the BJP government in the Lok Sabha at the time of the confidence motion.

The Indian National Congress has made it clear that the party will neither remain neutral nor abstain when the Vajpayee government seeks a vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil reiterated at the daily press briefing in New Delhi today that the party will vote against the BJP government. He denied allegations leveled by certain Janata Dal leaders that there was a conspiracy of connivance with regard to yesterday's letter to the president in connection with the support to the Third Front.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

India: Congress Decides To 'Pull Down' BJP Government

BK1705090596 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 0845 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A PTI report says an informal meeting of the Congress Working Committee [CWC] today decided to pull down the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government during the confidence vote in the Lok Sabha and to support the Third Front in the formation of the government. The agency, quoting party sources, said that though no resolution was adopted at the two-hour meeting, it was decided that the party should stick to its earlier resolutions and unitedly support the move to bring down the BJP government. The meeting was also attended by the party chief ministers and other leaders. It decided that the party would take the initiative to defeat any move by the ruling coalition to have a speaker elected. The report said the CWC meeting scheduled for 22 May has been postponed.

India: AICC Official Comments on Support for Rao, Coalition

BK1605131096 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 15 May 96 p 6

[Report by M.D. Nalapat]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] If Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao had quit as the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) leader, it is our party and not the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that would be called upon by the President to form the government," an All-India Congress Committee (AICC) office-bearer and former supporter of Mr Rao told this correspondent.

"The Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC), the Scindia group and the Tiwari group would have added 26 seats to the Congress tally of 136, thus pushing it past the BJP tally of 160. However, so long as Mr Rao is the party leader, these people will not return," he explained. Interestingly though, on Sunday the Congress Working Committee (CWC) as well as the CPP meeting voted for Mr Rao to continue.

According to some Congress officials, Mr Narasimha Rao feels that the Congress was defeated because it could not convey to the people the achievements of the government. "He has ignored his own neglect of the party organisation and the foisting of people such as Mr Bhuvanesh Chaturvedi, Mr Matang Singh, Mr Janardhan Poojary and Mr Pranab Mukherjee who have no grassroots contact. He has also ignored the fact that thanks to Babri Masjid, the majority of Muslims voted against the party, while the corruption factor drove away the middle classes," said a CWC member critical of Mr Rao's management of the Congress party.

What about the decision to ally with Jayalalitha? According to a Rao confidant, the caretaker Prime Minister "felt that there was no option, as the Congress could not have allied with the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] due to the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] factor." In short, Mr Rao feels that the fault is entirely with others and not him. Thus he is determined to stay put as CPP leader, "while agreeing to hand over the AICC presidentship to Mr Sharad Pawar, who can be kept in check as he is vulnerable on the corruption issue, besides being almost as unpopular with the Muslims as Mr Rao."

While a quick sounding of Congress office-bearers in the states revealed dismay at the CWC's seemingly meek acceptance of Mr Rao's leadership of the defeated party, enquiries suggest that at least four CWC members are likely to demand Mr Rao's resignation on May 22 "in order to help forge a coalition with the regional parties and the NF-LF [National Front-Left Front]." Within the Congress party, three names with wide acceptance appear to be those of Mr R.K. Hegde, Mr Deve Gowda and Mr Shivraj Patil, the former Lok Sabha Speaker. Mr G.K. Moopanar's name has also come up as a possible Prime Minister in a non-BJP coalition.

Soundings among Congress MPs revealed that in their view only a formal coalition led by a "mutually acceptable" individual would have a chance of forming a stable government, and not any arrangement involving "support from outside." Mr Rajesh Pilot, Mr Digvijay Singh, Mr Sharad Pawar and Mr J.B. Patnaik are understood to be mobilising support for such a move. "However, the obstacle is Mr Rao. No other group or party wants to touch him or accept the Congress as a coalition partner so long as it is headed by him," said one of these leaders on condition of anonymity.

"A government that relies on outside support for a majority would soon fall. Only a coalition can work," a CWC member said. "The moment of truth will come when the BJP takes office. Then, unless Mr Rao steps down, it will not be possible to forge a viable non-BJP coalition, and the Vajpayee government may continue." According to a state chief minister, "the CWC members lack the courage to remove Mr Rao. Only if an AICC meeting is called can this happen. By that time, the BJP would have dug in." An AICC office-bearer who was once a supporter of Mr Rao had the final word, "Some have been saying it is either Vajpayee or Rao, when in fact, it is either Vajpayee or Anyone But Rao."

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

India: Foreign Institutional Investors Said Scared of NF-LF Rule

BK1705035996 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 15 May 96 p 10

[Editorial: "Sitting on the Fence"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The capital market has been alternating between bullishness at the prospect of the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] forming government and pure panic as the National-Front Left Front [NF-LF] combine's chances brighten. While businessmen remain discreet, stock brokers see no reason for diplomacy. The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) President M G Damani has openly said that a NF- LF government would see stock prices collapse. But the real worry concerns the Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs). These institutions had turned aggressively bullish just before the elections on the assumption that even if the Congress fails to form government it would be the "more progressive" Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in command.

The FIIs are terrified at the thought of a NF-LF government since the main parties in this combine had threatened to reverse reforms. They are further perplexed because the reported negotiations between the NF-LF and the Congress make no mention of continuing reforms. If both parties are willing to jettison the reform process, the FIIs would be inclined to unload their holdings and climb back on the fence to watch what the new government does—and this could lead to a big drop in share prices. The FIIs today control the biggest chunk of floating stock in all blue chip stock, particularly scrips which form the stock indices. Many FIIs have already frozen buy orders; heavy selling by them could lead to a free fall in stock prices.

There is also little chance of this fall being cushioned by purchases from Indian institutions and mutual funds, because, except for insurance companies which have been steady buyers the others have not raised fresh funds and have little liquidity. Corporate houses, reeling under the year long liquidity crunch, are also unlikely to turn buyers. FIIs may prefer to be fence-sitters because of some basic worries. Whichever party forms government, its first task would be the budget exercise involving several hard decisions. These will include measures to rein in uncontrolled government expenditure, cutting the fiscal deficit and revising administered prices of petrol and fertiliser which are still pegged to a rupee-dollar rate of Rs [rupees] 31.4. It would also have to spell out its stand on reforms and come up with an alternative to depending on foreign investment, if it decides to discourage it.

According to financial experts, selling more public sector shares is one simple way for the government to raise money, but a NF-LF combine may resist this too. With no answers available to any of these worries, most investors might prefer to reduce their holdings, hedge their bets and wait until they are clear about the new government's economic agenda. But given the record of pragmatism in state governments run by the constituents of the NF-LF the market should reserve its judgment before taking political sides.

India: Kashmir Government Issues Warning to 'Absenting' Employees

BK1605045796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, additional companies of security forces have started arriving for smooth conduct of polling in the remaining four parliamentary constituencies of Anantnag, Baramula, Srinagar, and Udhampur later this month. The government has reiterated that all necessary arrangements for free and fair conduct of the poll will be made and nobody will be allowed to obstruct the election process in the state. Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir government has issued a warning against those employees who are absenting themselves from their duties.

India: Government Employees Join Kashmir Strike

BK1605151396 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Reports from occupied Kashmir say the ongoing strike of the Kashmiri employees has further widened as the strike has been joined by the employees of the Indian Government offices in Srinagar. Consequently, the State Bank of India, the Punjab National Bank, and some other central government banks and offices have been locked up. Reports received from various parts of the valley indicate that work has come to a standstill in government offices due to the employees strike.

According to KMS, the Indian troops have besieged vast areas in Gandarbal and are carrying out siege and search operation in Charar Sharif. The troops killed three innocent people in Anantnag- Islamabad and one was shot dead in Jammu region. In a clash with troops at Wanapura in Pulwama area, four Indian troops, including an officer, were killed while two mujahideen were martyred.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

India: 2 'Pakistan-Trained Militants' Killed in Kashmir

BK1705091896 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Alert troops foiled yet another attempt by Pakistan to disrupt the election process in Jammu and Kashmir. Two Pakistan-trained militants were killed while they tried to infiltrate the border in the north of Kashmir. Elsewhere, eight militants surrendered to security forces while seven were arrested during search operations. A huge quantity of arms and ammunition has also been recovered.

In another development, the state government has initiated steps to put down with a heavy hand activities of pro-Pakistani militants trying to obstruct peace and the electoral process in the Kashmir valley. The chief secretary held a meeting of senior civil and police officials in Srinagar yesterday. He also announced an award of up to 50,000 rupees to anyone who would help in nabbing activists of militant outfits.

India: 8 'Foreign Mercenaries' Killed in Kashmir Encounter

BK1705091396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the Kashmir Valley, eight foreign mercenaries were killed in an encounter with security forces at Arizal in Badgom District last night. According to an official spokesman, the militants fired on the security forces when they cordoned off the area on specific information and in the return fire all the eight foreign mercenaries, most of them Afghans and Pakistanis, were killed. A large quantity of arms and ammunition was also recovered from the scene of the encounter. It may be recalled that over 30 foreign mercenaries have been killed during the last one month alone indicating Pakistan's efforts to sabotage the election process in Jammu and Kashmir.

India: 'At Least 10' Killed, Over 20,000 Homeless in Assam Unrest

BK1605161796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] In Assam, at least 10 people have been reported killed and over 20,000 people left homeless following large-scale arson and violence in Gossaigaon area of Kokrajhar District during clashes reportedly between the Bodo and adivasi [tribal] population. According to official reports at Guwahati, 15 villages were set ablaze. Unofficial reports say the death toll is much higher. Our Guwahati correspondent reports that five relief camps have been opened in different places where affected people continue to pour in. Additional security forces have been rushed to the affected areas. [passage omitted]

India: Gunmen Kill Police Official, 3 Others in Assam

BK1605122496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1135 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Assam, unidentified gunmen shot dead the Tinsukia District superintendent of police [DSP], Mr. R.K. Singh, and three others in Tinsukia town this afternoon. Seven other police personnel were seriously injured. According to official sources at Guwahati, the DSP was going to his office when the gunmen traveling in a minitruck opened indiscriminate fire. Mr. Singh and two police personnel were killed on the spot. The gunmen also opened fire on the escort vehicle of Mr. Singh, injuring seven policemen seriously. One civilian traveling in an auto rickshaw has also been killed in the shoot-out. Police immediately cordoned off the area and launched a massive manhunt to nab the culprits.

India: Commentary on Pakistani Role in Afghanistan

BK1705032396 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 16 May 96

[Commentary by Arun Kumar Roy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Power equation in strife-torn Afghanistan is changing radically. President Rabbani, who had been sending feelers to various faction leaders in the country to come and join in a coalition government, has achieved a major breakthrough, and that is to secure the support and cooperation of the most powerful opponent, Golboddin Hekmatyar. For some time now it was known that Professor Rabbani had been trying to build a national government, but the power (?politics) in Afghanistan was subjected to various international pulls and pressures. Among this was the sinister role being played by Pakistan in trying to have a proxy regime in Afghanistan.

Since the days of the Soviet intervention, Pakistan became the spearhead to fight the Soviet-backed government. The United States in those days poured billions of dollars to encourage all kinds of fundamentalist Muslim forces from all over the world with the objective of driving the Soviets from Kabul. Succeed it did in throwing out the communists, but they had no plan or idea how to fill the vacuum. The result was that poor Afghanistan suffered more and more as the country was torn by ethnic and tribal groups and different religious persuasions. But what was most disastrous was the effort of Pakistan

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

with the open support of Washington in installing the government in Kabul which will dance at Islamabad's tunes. At the beginning it seemed to be so. Hekmatyar with open support from Pakistan and tacit support from Washington seemed to march triumphantly toward Kabul. The Afghan Government under Prof. Rabbani and his able defense minister resisted Hekmatyar outside Kabul.

As the stalemate continued, Pakistan lost confidence in Hekmatyar and decided to ditch him. It built up an alternative force called Taleban. For all its protestation, Pakistan was trying to redraw the battle map of Afghanistan through the Taleban. To begin with, the Taleban were supposed to be students of madrassas [religious schools] teaching Islamic fundamentalism. But in reality, they were active soldiers and pilots of the Pakistani defense forces working under the guidance of the infamous ISI [Inter Service Intelligence]. Otherwise, how can one explain that an Afghan boy studying Islamic scriptures suddenly started flying fighter planes over Afghanistan? To begin with, the Pakistani plan which was openly [words indistinct]. And as the well-known Pakistani commentator M.B. Naqvi writing in the DAWN of Karachi said, it is hard to believe that some of the students of Pakistan or Afghanistan, or both, could go out and seize nine out of 29 provinces in Afghanistan in four months.

But the Pakistani game plan to keep Kabul tied to its apron strings seems to have received a rude shock with the reports of Afghan groups reaching accord on power sharing. Hekmatyar has already joined hands with Rabbani and sent his militiamen to fight pro-Pakistani Taleban. He may become the new prime minister of the country. Even the Uzbek warlord Dostam is believed to have reached an understanding with the present Kabul government. Within the next few days, the picture of new power sharing and formation of a broad- based government in Kabul will be clear. This was a development which will be welcomed by most of the countries except Pakistan.

Islamabad might have more reasons to be worried about its Afghan game plan, because according to some reports, its own creation Taleban seems to be cracking. Some of its leaders are reported to be now looking to Iran for inspiration and guidance. Pakistan had been overambitious with open blessing from Washington to make Afghanistan its vassal state. One of the main purposes was to use the country as a corridor to link up with Central Asia with a vast potentiality of trade and commerce. But the new rail link between Iran and Turkmenistan that became operational a few days ago offered the landlocked Central Asian republic an access to the warm water port in the Gulf. It will also help India to consolidate its commercial and cultural ties with the Central Asian countries. To a large extent, this historic rail link will obviate the need to use the Pakistan and Afghan route to Central Asia which Islamabad was desperate to deny India.

India: Article Views Ring Magnet Issue, National Interests

BK1605131696 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 15 May 96 p 11

[Article by C. Uday Bhaskar: "Ring Magnets and National Interest"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The decision of the Clinton administration (May 10) that no sanctions of any kind would be imposed against China, and by extension Pakistan, in the ring magnet case brings the curtain down on a rather complex and vitiated issue.

The nature of the resolution of this incident, that comes under the purview of the US Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act (NPPA) 1994, also draws attention to two post-Cold War paradigms — the emergence of prudent promiscuity in international relations and the need for informed flexibility in defining and protecting the national interest on one hand; and secondly, the power that inheres in controlling and shaping the proliferation narrative in the furtherance of the dominant national interest.

US secretary of state Warren Christopher justified taking an appreciable length of time to come to a "final determination" about how best to acknowledge the transfer of these components from China to Pakistan due to the implications of such acknowledgment on the troubled Sino-US relationship. He finally concluded that there was no basis for invoking the provisions of the NPPA.

Does this go against the facts of the case and distort the limits of interpretative freedom available to the executive? The short answer is a resounding "yes" and the most trenchant criticism of such indulgence has come from leading American legislators, security analysts and commentators who have pilloried the White House for transgressions ranging from pusillanimity to political perfidy.

Be that as it may, the operative aspect is the manner in which the US administration has defined the national interest in the turbulent post-Cold War era and the flexible manner in which responses have been evolved to a wide range of issues. Without going into the long-term merits of such Sino-US engagement, the relevance for India lies in noting the prioritization of the US national interest in all deliberations — be

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

they economic or security, bilateral or multilateral and shaping postures and responses accordingly.

Despite the fierce nuclear nonproliferation zealotry and anti- Iran sentiment exuded by the Clinton administration, the ring magnet resolution which seeks an accommodation with China is not isolated. The Clinton administration also announced that it would not impose sanctions against Russia for its sale of nuclear reactors to Iran. This deal aroused considerable concern in the same administration till recently, for it accused Teheran of pursuing a clandestine nuclear weapons programme notwithstanding Iran's claims that it was a declared non-nuclear weapon state.

Again, the entire nuclear nonproliferation narrative as applied to Iran has taken a U-turn with Washington now willing to accept Iran's non-nuclear weapon status within the NPT [Nonproliferation Treaty] regime as positive assurances of its peaceful nuclear pursuit.

This fidelity to the perceived national interest assumes import at the current juncture in the Indian context, for the prevailing political realignment and the imminence of a new Central government has given rise to various interpretations on core security issues.

Some commentaries in the western media have drawn attention to India's nuclear posture of non weaponised deterrence and ballistic missile restraint and have alluded to the emergence of militant Hindu radicalism that will "play the nationalist card on security issues".

The semantic suggestion here is disturbing, for it implies that the Indian national interest will undergo a noticeable transmutation depending on the party in power and that in a new dispensation, nuclear-armed, militant Hinduism will emerge as the new global threat after militant Islam.

Such a pernicious narrative needs to be nipped in the bud and it merits reiteration that the Indian national interest, like any other, is sacred, constant and inviolable. Political parties may adopt a mix of stratagems and means to realise this end but there should be no doubt that the core national interest is fixed. In the security dimension it is a coincidence that India is attempting to evolve a national response and posture to meet the challenges of a post-Cold War/post-NPT extension global order in the midst of a national election.

While concepts such as an equitable global order and a commitment to disarmament characterised earlier Indian debates on the nuclear/missile issue, the time has come to place the national interest in the forefront on all issues.

Iran

Iran: Construction Minister Meets Cuban Official

LD1605115096 Tehran IRNA in English 0926 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 16, IRNA — Iranian Minister of Construction Jihad Gholam Reza Foruzesh in a meeting with the Cuban minister of state, Wilfredo Lewis Rodrigues, expressed satisfaction over improvement of Tehran-Havana relations.

The Iranian minister said that the joint Iran-Cuba economic commission is active and its sixth session will be held in Havana soon.

The Cuban minister, referring to the vast available trade potentials in both countries, said that the sixth joint commission is expected to introduce new areas for expansion of bilateral cooperation, particularly, in fisheries and production of medicine and vaccine.

Iran: Visiting Kuwaiti Minister Meets Officials

LD1605124396 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The visiting Kuwaiti minister of religious endowments and Islamic affairs [Dr. 'Ali Fahd al-Zumay'], at a meeting with our country's Islamic Guidance Minister Mostafa Mirsalim and Mehdi Emam-Jamari, head of the Endowments and Charity Affairs Organization, said: The Islamic ulema and intellectuals should think of future Islamic issues and the Islamic community. By seeking common points, they should avoid sectarian, ethnic, and factional disputes.

Referring to Iran's remarkable progress, he added: Completion of the golden axis [Sarakhs-Tedzhen railway] gave pride to the Islamic community and revived the memory of the region's past history and the silk route. The Islamic Republic of Iran and other nations of the region are proud of this achievement.

Mirsalim, for his part, said: The two countries have much in common and will benefit from the expansion of their ties. He added: Our enemies are trying to divide the Muslim nations.

Iran: Rafsanjani Expresses Desire To Improve Relations With EU

MS1605090996 London THE EUROPEAN in English 16-22 May 96 p 1

[Report by Alex Standish, incorporating interview with Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani: "Iranians Ready To Court Union"; date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — Iran's President Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in an interview with The

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

European, has said he is working towards improving relations with the European Union in spite of tensions raised by Middle East instability.

Rafsanjani said he was pleased to have welcomed EU ministers to Tehran and looked forward to further contacts. He spoke as the opening of the 300-kilometre Iran-Turkmenistan rail link on 13 May highlighted the growing importance of the Islamic republic in the region and the inability of the United States and its allies to contain what it still sees as Tehran's malign influence.

Rafsanjani and his Servants of Construction faction, which dominates the newly elected Majlis (parliament), see bridge-building with EU members as a priority. Ties are close with Germany, a key trading partner, despite the hitch of the now-cancelled arrest warrant for Iran's minister for information on terrorist charges.

One senior Iranian politician told The European: "We are keen to develop closer economic ties with EU members and believe that they can be achieved despite negative pressure from obvious quarters.

"We believe that Iran is a force for stability and economic prosperity."

Minister for Mines and Minerals Huseyn Mahluji said: "It is clear to us that many Europeans resent being dictated to by the US. We wonder why these bullying tactics are not confronted in the West."

Iran: Rowhani—U.S., Israel See Tehran as 'Sole Stumbling Block'

LD1605153096 Tehran IRNA in English 1419 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karaj, Tehran Province, May 16, IRNA — Majles Vice-Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Hasan Rowhani said here on Thursday [16 May] the U.S. and the Zionism [as received] see the Islamic Republic of Iran as the sole stumbling block in their way.

Rowhani was speaking to a group of the personnel of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) on the eve of Muharram al-Haram, the mourning month on the tenth day of which (Ashura) the third imam of Prophet Mohammad's household, Imam Hoseyn (A.S.) [peace be upon him] was martyred.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rowhani referred to the various conspiracies of the U.S. against the Islamic revolution and said the enemy has never stood so openly with its unsheathed sword against Iran as it does today.

He said the enemy knows that the only group capable of bringing the Zionists to their knees are the followers of Imam Hoseyn (A.S.) and those inspired by Ashura.

Iran: Israel, U.S. Said Attempting To Implicate Iran in al-Mijdad Affair

LD1605195996 Tehran IRNA in English 1909 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Athens, May 16, IRNA — Zionist intelligence sources Thursday [16 May] claimed that the person who was badly injured at a hotel in occupied al-Quds last month had planned to blow up an Israeli passenger airliner, said a dispatch from al-Quds (Jerusalem). The accused, Husayn Muhammad Husayn al-Mijdad, who reportedly arrived in Israel aboard a Swiss-Air plane was carrying a false British passport.

The Zionists allege that al-Mijdad was instructed by agents of the Iranian embassy in Beirut to carry out a suicidal bomb attack in the Zionist state and to blow up the El Al plane. Al-Mijdad was badly hurt in an explosion at the Lawrence Hotel in east al-Quds on April 12. He lost an arm, his two feet and his eye-sight.

However, it is widely believed in occupied Palestine that the attempted implication of Iran in the al-Mijdad affair is part of the ongoing Israeli-American campaign to vilify Iran because of Tehran's opposition to the so-called Middle East peace process, regarded by most Arabs and Muslims a sell-out of Palestine, said the dispatch.

Tel Aviv and Washington are also exasperated over their failure to liquidate the Lebanese Hizballah pro-Iranian Islamic Resistance Movement in South Lebanon.

Iran: Foreign Ministry Refutes Recent Peres Accusations

LD1605215396 Tehran IRNA in English 2128 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 16, IRNA — Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi here this evening told IRNA that the Zionist premeditated and deliberate crimes against the defenseless Lebanese people who were sheltered in the U.N. refugee camp at Qana, indicates the depth of hostility and animosity of the Qods occupying regime against the Muslims and its opposition to peace and security in the Middle East region.

Answering a question about the recent accusations against Iran by the Zionist Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, Mohammadi noted that the Zionist regime which regards Iran as the major obstacle in the way of the enforcement of its aggressive and hegemonistic policies against the regional Muslim states, tries to accuse Iran through baseless allegations.

He said that the Israeli regime would not be able to distort the religious values of the Muslim and Arab

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

nations due to the fact that the nations in the region have been awakened to the [word indistinct].

Mohammadi added that baseless Zionist allegations and accusations against others cannot divert the attention of the public opinion of the Muslims and the freedom loving people of the world from the crimes which it has committed.

Mohammadi rejected also another allegation against Iran by the Zionist regime in connection with an explosion at a hotel in the occupied Palestinian land last month.

The foreign office spokesman finally pointed out that such an allegation is nothing new. He referred to the empty accusation as a pure chain propaganda machinations aimed at bringing about results in the forthcoming elections, adding that such a design was a futile attempt as people are fully aware of this old ruse.

Iran: Yemeni, Iranian Transportation Ministers Hold Talks

LD1605200996 Tehran IRIB Television Third Program Network in English 1815 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Promotion of Irano-Yemeni cooperation, was touched upon today by Ahmad Musa'id Husayn, the visiting Yemeni minister of road and transportation, and Mr. Torkan, his Iranian counterpart.

The Yemeni official and his retinue, during their stay in Iran, visited several plants, and called on Tehran to cooperate with Yemen to produce automotive spare parts.

Iran: Writer on Tadic War Crimes Trial

LD1605222796 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 9 May 96 p 2

["Viewpoint" by Yasmin P.: "War Crimes Trial"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The first Serb to go on trial for war crimes in what was once Yugoslavia is a former cafe owner — a small fry compared to the bigger criminals who are still at large, but nevertheless the trial is of significance as it opens the door for a way to help the bruised Bosnian Muslim population of the war-torn Balkans and perhaps, act as a balm on the scars of the mentally and physically wounded Bosnians.

The International Criminal Tribunal (ICT) for former Yugoslavia at the Hague, indicted Dusan Tadic in April last year, exactly a year after he fled Bosnia after being part of the brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing, following the break-up of Yugoslav Federation.

Acts of "unspeakable horror" were committed by the deranged Tadic, including sexual assault, murder and torture. He is the first among the 54 Serbs indicted by the ICT for war crimes committed in Bosnia, to go on trial.

The ICT was established under the auspices of the United nations for grave violations against the Geneva Convention, violations of the laws or customs of war and crimes against humanity.

"What man has done to man in the name of nationalism ...[ellipsis as published] strains even the most agile mind of reason," the prosecutor said referring to Tadic's inhuman crimes.

While the rule of law must be upheld in the trial, it should be remembered that there should be fairness in meting out quick justice to the innocent victims. Many of them were killed and for those who survive, life is a living death. They have witnessed the brutal manner in which their loved ones were tortured and killed before their very eyes, their homes destroyed and the breath of their young ones snuffed out deliberately, in Serbian pogroms and genocide.

So far, 14 Serbs have been formally indicted and only seven have been arrested as the court has no powers of enforcement and must rely on the NATO forces in Bosnia and the signatories to the Dayton peace accords for enforcement of its mandates. However, the foreign peacekeeping troops in Bosnia are reluctant to arrest war criminals, and as a result the special tribunal set up three years ago has been dogged by various problems and Tadic is just one of the only three held in its 24 jail cells.

The main ringleaders behind the ethnic cleansing Serbian President Radovan Karadzic and his military commander Ratko Mladic — are not yet in the tribunal's net. Both have been indicted for crimes against humanity.

Though the trial is about one man at the moment, it has historic dimensions. As it could perhaps be the only way in bringing some consolation to the Bosnian Muslims.

Iran: Speech at University Cancelled After Protest, Clashes

LD1605122296 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 13 May 96 p 3

[Article by the news network of AKHBAR: "Dr. Sorush's Speech Did Not Take Place"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A speech by Dr. Abdolkarim Sorush, which was scheduled to take place at a seminar in honor of the late Morteza Motahhari in the central

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

amphitheatre of Amir Kabir Industrial University, was cancelled because of objections by the Ansar-e Hezbollah group and the tense atmosphere in Amir Kabir University and the nearby streets.

According to our correspondent's report, Ansar-e Hezbollah, which had declared its opposition to Dr. Sorush's speech in public and in universities, particularly in the seminar, congregated in front of the main gate of Amir Kabir University yesterday and prevented the speech from taking place. This resulted in the seminar eventually starting three hours late in a tense atmosphere, with only a speech by Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin 'Ali Hojjati-Kermani.

According to the same report, about 200 supporters of Ansar-e Hezbollah began congregating in front of the main gate of the university, where law enforcement forces were stationed, from around 0800, and some made speeches until the end of the seminar (around noon). [passage omitted]

While the Ansar-e Hezbollah group congregated in front of Amir Kabir Industrial University, the nearby streets were cordoned off by law enforcement officers and traffic on streets leading to the gathering were kept under control. The university's main gate was also kept closed at all times, and law enforcement officers admitted only students from the university through other gates. For that reason a number of students from other universities who had come to attend the seminar were unsuccessful and stood behind closed doors. However, some climbed over the fence and went to the seminar.

The tension inside and outside the university eased when, around 1130, the spokesman of the Islamic association of the university apologized to the audience and announced that, due to tension and unrest, Dr. Sorush's speech would not take place and only Hojjat ol-Eslam Hojjati-Kermani would speak.

General Abolfathi, commander of the Greater Tehran Law Enforcement Force, was also present at the Ansar-e Hezbollah's rally and supervised the operations of the force.

Hasan Ghafuri-Fard, deputy for Tehran in the Fifth Majles, was also present, but had to wait behind the closed gate for some time. He also refrained from answering questions from students who asked about his views.

There were clashes inside the university grounds and in the nearby streets yesterday between those for and against Dr. Sorush speaking. A number of students and participants in the seminar were arrested during the clashes.

Iran: Mayor Denies Charges of Cheating in Elections

LD1605133996 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 13 May 96 p 14

[Article from the "Incidents" column: "The Mayor of Region 12 Rejected Charges Against Him in Court Yesterday"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At yesterday's session of branch 26 of Tehran's general court, which was convened to investigate charges against Mayor of Region 12 Asghar Nasiri and 12 of his colleagues, Nasiri presented his defense and gave an assurance that he had entered the elections on the proposal and encouragement of the people of Saveh; that he had used his own money to finance the election campaign; and that he had not spent a penny from the coffers of Region 12 council. In another part of his defense, the mayor of Region 12 said that the 30 to 35 people who had travelled to Saveh from Tehran to vote had done so of their own free will and that it had not been, in any way, against the law.

At yesterday's court session, charges such as misuse of council facilities and cheating in the elections were brought against the mayor of Region 12. In his defense, while denying the charges, Nasiri said:

My becoming a candidate was not my own idea, but in response to suggestions from friends and relatives who had repeatedly asked me to serve in the Majles as deputy for Saveh. [passage omitted]

It has been said that I circulated a bulletin on the activities of the council. That is not a charge. It was done by the council's public relations office to inform the people of my performance. I am not guilty of any misuse of facilities. In fact, I have not committed any crime to require a defense. About the briefcases handed out as presents, they were presented by the deputy financial director as incentives to employees or officials who had worked hard. I remember I had in my car two or three of the briefcases, which I was to give as presents to people who had worked hard for the council. It is a separate matter.

There was no need to bring people from Tehran to Saveh to vote. There were between 30 and 35 people who had voluntarily come to vote. Anyone could vote anywhere they liked. Some came of their own free will and contributed to my campaign. The posters were also printed using my own money. I have never used council facilities. Maybe I travelled to Saveh in a council car once or twice. About looking after people, they were to send me their bill after the elections and I was to reimburse them. [passage omitted]

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

The total expenditure on the elections came to 1.5 million tumans, which was spent properly and using my own money. Therefore, any charges against me are baseless. [passage omitted]

Explanations by the Public Relations Office of the Judiciary

In a telephone conversation with HAMSHAHRI last night, the head of the public relations office of Tehran's judiciary department said that it was against the law to publish the names of the accused during the preliminary hearing and that the legislators had in mind the people's reputation and honor.

HAMSHAHRI: It should be pointed out that, as the public relations office of Tehran Province's judiciary department has stated, until the trial is over the mass media are not allowed to publish the names of the accused and the charges against them. But, unfortunately, one of the afternoon papers has broken the law and violated the people's reputation and honor and has published the full list of the accused. That action, which is against the law, ethics, and social norms, has been committed by a newspaper which, ostensibly, considers itself a bigger champion of religious and moral rights and ethics than other publications.

Iran: Majles Approves Guardian Council Amendments

LD1705104496 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 13 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed article: "Islamic Penal Bill Amended in Yesterday's Open Session of the Islamic Majles"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Political Desk: The Islamic Penal Bill, which had been returned [to the Majles] by the Guardian Council was reviewed in an open session of the Islamic Consultative Majles yesterday.

According to a report by a Hamshahri correspondent, at the session, chaired by [Majles Speaker] Mr. Nateq-Nuri, the amendments by the Majles Judicial and Legal Committee were endorsed by the deputies. According to the article 16 of the Islamic Penal Bill, section concerning punishments, anyone who insults Islamic sanctities or any one of the great prophets or the immaculate Imams, peace be upon them, or the immaculate Seddiqe, peace be upon her, will be sentenced to death if that person comes within the scope of the denying the Prophet [sab al-nabi] ruling. Otherwise such a person will be sentenced to imprisonment from one to five years. According to the amendments to notes in article 52, anyone charged with holding, or guarding, or escorting a prisoner or detainee who assists his charge in escaping or facilitates his escape will be sentenced to imprisonment from one to five years if his charge had been accused of a crime which carries a death sentence, or stoning, or crucifixion, or imprisonment of ten years and more.

If the prisoner has been sentenced according to retribution laws [for homicide] the person instrumental in his escape is dutybound to hand over his charge otherwise he will be imprisoned and stay imprisoned until such time as his charge has been handed over. If the accused is tried in absentia and found not guilty or guilty of manslaughter, then the person assisting with the escape of the accused will undergo the sentence. If the escapee dies or his hand over becomes impossible, if he has been found guilty of homicide and sentenced to pay retribution, the person assisting his escape will have to pay the blood money to the relatives of the victim.

According to the amended article 56, anyone giving refuge to an escaped prisoner or assisting with the escape of an escaped prisoner or a person under an arrest warrant for a crime will be exempt from punishment if it is proven in court that he had believed the innocence of the accused or the prisoner.

According to the amended note in article 97, agreements entailing usury concluded by a father and his progeny, husband and wife or a Muslim and an infidel, in favor of the Muslim, are allowed and will not result in punishment.

According to the amended note in article 140, those women who appear in public without religiously required dress will be sentenced to between 10 days and two months imprisonment and fined from 50,000 to 500,000 rials. The review of the [rest of the] bill was deferred to the next Majles session. [passage omitted]

Iran: President Comments on Need To Eradicate Poverty

NC1605190696 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian 30 Apr 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani met participants in the third press festival and stressed the role and importance of the mass media in increasing awareness and elevating human knowledge. He said: The essence of human beings evolves on the basis of awareness and knowledge. The level of a society's awareness and its ability to analyze issues determines the pace at which it will be able to traverse the path of development and advancement. [passage omitted]

The president answered two questions of the KHORASAN correspondent, the details of which are as follows:

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Recently a deputy stated that in the formulation of the first and second Five-Year Plans for development, the spirit of social justice was not kept in mind. What is your opinion in this regard?

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani replied: This was rhetoric for the election campaign. The second plan was approved by the government and submitted to the Majles. It has been approved by the Majles but with some amendments which is natural. Accordingly if something is missing, it concerns all of us.

The next question by the KHORASAN correspondent was: It can be inferred that the government's attention to poverty and its resolve to eliminate it in this country was the first step toward its becoming a model for the world. It can be clearly said such a success will prove that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a worthy example. What measures will be taken and what research and findings will this be based on?

The president replied: Eradication of poverty is one of the basic tasks that we have been pursuing since the outset of the revolution but we did not have the proper opportunities. Now that circumstances are favorable, the Plan and Budget Organization is preparing a project which has the eradication of poverty as its focal point. It will also seek to improve the living conditions of those currently existing below the poverty line.

He continued: We have defined the poverty line, and if we can find employment for those who can work and thus earn a living we will do so. Until then, they will be given unemployment insurance, but not to those who merely wish to remain idle. This is the main thrust. Resources have been allocated and it is expected that by the end of the Second Plan (four years from now) all our people will have unemployment insurance coverage. Those below the poverty line will be given government assistance. This is the overall spirit of our work, which will be implemented with proper planning. It was part of our important objectives even prior to the victory of the revolution.

Iran: Editors Back Formation of Journalists Association

LD1605202896 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 11 May 96 p 2

[News Item: "A Number of Editors-in-Chief Express Views About The Need To Form a Press and Journalistic Union"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tehran, Islamic Republic News Agency — In interviews with our correspondent, a group of the editors-in-chief of the country's newspapers called for the serious participation and presence of responsible Muslim journalists in the formation of a union of journalists.

Mr. Safai'e-far, editor-in-chief of the AKHBAR newspaper, said: Until now there has not been a significant effort to form a real and professional association for the press community, and although there is a brief reference to the matter in the 1358 [1979/80] press law but such an association has never had a serious presence in the press community.

He added: The professional problems of journalists demand the existence of a formation, under the title of a union or an association, which could properly defend the rights of journalists and to take effective steps toward establishing the authority of the profession.

On the condition of membership and the participation of individuals in the association, Mr. Safai'e-far said: Individuals who are among the founding members or [ordinary] members of the association should be responsible and trusted journalists who are loyal to the system. He said: Opportunists and self-motivated individuals who enter this profession for fame and wealth must be prevented from entering the association.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Do'a'i, editor-in-chief of ETTELA'AT, said it is necessary to form a union of journalists but the movement must be based on the guidance and statements of the eminent leader of the revolution. He added: Members of the association must be among those who are currently on the staff of trusted publications. The editor-in-chief of the newspaper said some people are expressing their views about the association or intend to participate in it, but they don't have much professional involvement in the daily affairs of the press.

Regarding the charter and the main responsibilities of the association, he said: After the elections, members of the association must draw up a new charter.

Mr. Soltani-far, editor-in-chief of the English-language daily IRAN NEWS, said the formation of a press association is one of the most urgent cases in the country. He said we have a group of irresponsible and monopolizing publications in the country which want to misuse the association that is to be formed, but the vigorous and responsible publications which are only interested in healthy press activity must drive away those who are irresponsible and monopolizing, and try to form a healthy press association in order to help the growth and development of the country's press.

Mr. Soltani-far added: I believe that the association should be active in achieving professional goals as well as political issues, because there would be no need for it if it wants to remain within the context of professional goals. At the moment the press cooperative is involved

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

in professional activities. Regarding who should be a member of the association, he said experience and responsible authors and journalists should bring together all the responsible and Muslim people for participation in the association.

Seyyed Jalal Fayyaz, editor-in-chief of the QODS newspaper, said: In view of the qualitative and quantitative growth of the press in the country, I think that the formation of a press association is necessary. [passage omitted]

Regarding the possible composition of the association, he said responsible Muslim individuals must form the association. He added: the union must not become fall victim to a form of monopoly [inhibiting] differences of style, because the presence of responsible individuals who have different opinions would help the advance and growth of the association. The editor-in-chief of the Qods newspaper said: Situations that could lead to the deviation of the association include the tendency to a particular faction or group, the non-existence of different styles, and the infiltration of some irresponsible journalists.

Finally, he said: Recognizing the recent guidance and statements of his eminence, the leader of the revolution, regarding the formation of a press association, it seems to my friends, people who are active in the press and myself that it is best if there is no delay in forming the association.

Iran: Commentary Views Importance of Railroad Construction

LD1605131296 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 13 May 96 p 1

[Unattributed commentary: "The Failure of the Policy of Embargo Against Iran"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] This morning the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen railway will be opened. Senior delegations from 55 countries — including 12 presidents, vice presidents, and ministers — are gathered for the first time in the history of the Islamic Republic of Iran to witness the opening of a route that links Iran to Central Asia. [passage omitted]

The success and efficiency of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen railway, especially its economic effects, entirely depends on the political situation in the region, including the relations between Iran and its neighboring countries. The route is not expected to be used to its full capacity in a tense political climate or an atmosphere of misunderstanding. The fate of railway projects between Iran and Turkey, and Iran and the former Soviet Union is an example that supports this claim.

Despite this, the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen railway and its impressive economic and geopolitical importance is an indication of the opportunities that our country has lost for years and is still occasionally losing. A full and profitable use of the Mashhad-Sarakhs railway, as well as of the railway linking Bafq to Bandar-e 'Abbas is impossible without the Bafq-Mashhad railway.

The question is that in our country, which imports $3 to $4 billion worth of food, there is a doubt whether activities on the Bafq-Mashhad railway will start because of the financial costs. Is our country not capable of building such a strategic railway with the high volume of wealth and national products that it enjoys? Instead of offering cigarettes on our domestic market at one-fifth the price in other countries, could we not charge taxes at 20 rials for each cigarette and earn an annual income of 600 to 800 billion rials to be used in the construction of this vital route?

Despite all its importance, the inauguration of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen railway shows our vital tasks in determining our priorities and allocating our national resources to these priorities. If the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen railway is so vital, then the construction of the Bafq-Mashhad and Tehran-Khorravi railways, the upgrading of the country's entire railway system, and the laying of twin tracks on the Tehran-Mashhad and Tehran-Khoramshahr railways are also more vital than that. One must identify one's priorities.

Iran: Astara Deemed 'Open International Port of Entry'

LD1605221096 Tehran IRNA in English 2036 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Astara (Gilan Province), May 16, IRNA — Governor of Iran's northwestern provincial city of Astara, 'Abdol Reza Biazar, here today announced that the Astara of Iran is now an open international port of entry. He said that from now onward all of the citizens and trucks of the regional countries are permitted to pass through this border freely, adding that Astara of Iran allowed entry only to the member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) prior to this announcement.

Iran: 'One of World's Biggest Radio Stations' Opens in Sirjan

LD1705104896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The country's giant short-wave radio station in Sirjan [Kerman Province] underwent a test run yesterday. The head of the Islamic Republic of

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Iran's Voice and Vision [Iranian Radio and TV] was present at the ceremony. We have a report on this.

[Unidentified correspondent] From the point of view of equipment, the radio station is one of the world's biggest radio stations. It has 10 500-kW transmitters, 48 fixed directional antenna systems on top of 33 masts, and a multiband steerable antenna.

The radio station has been built on 18 square kilometers of land.

The Sirjan short-wave radio station is able to beam VIRI programs to most parts of the world, particularly those regions which the country's other short-wave stations cannot cover.

Apart from an emergency 7-MW power station, this radio station also enjoys an advanced computer system which is able to operate automatically all the equipment used in program transmission.

The construction, installation, and commissioning of this powerful radio station have been carried out by the engineers, experts, and technical personnel of the Voice and Vision's Planning and Development Unit within three years.

[sign off] Central News Unit, Kerman.

Iran: Paper Publishes People's Letters

96LA0196A Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU in Persian 5 Mar 96 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] **People's Letters**

You Be the Judge

[Boxed item] **Dear Readers**

Please write clearly, briefly, and with documentation on one side of the paper. The newspaper reserves the right to summarize and edit your statements. [end boxed item]

I will tell you about an incredible incident that occurred in the Islamic society, so that perhaps I can enkindle instruction to do good and prevent prohibited acts.

On a week day, I went to the Cooperative Company for the Procurement and Distribution of Ironware in Central province, located next to the Karbala'iha Mosque, to obtain information and guidance. I explained my question and problem, hoping to receive an answer and guidance. I was told that my question and problem were unclear to them, and only Mr.... could guide me and issue the necessary instructions.

Happily, most respectfully, and with permission, I entered the office of Mr.... I greeted him and most respectfully approached his desk. I did not receive an answer to my greeting, which is religiously obligatory, and was immediately faced with the question: Have you been smoking? In response I said, respectfully, that yes and that I had a problem. He said very seriously: If you have a problem, go and jump off the eighth floor.

After hearing this irrational answer, no matter how I tried to respond to this possessor of gold and power, my human politeness dictated to me to respect his esteemed age and white beard. In my confusion, he reminded me again: Get out, I am getting sick. I dashed out of his room, like someone struck by lightning, and was engulfed in my own thoughts, as to how such individuals can tell God's creatures to go and kill themselves. Should I buy French and American perfumes and scents to go to the offices of people with this type of thinking, so that His Honor can pay some attention to the problems of the people? Should officials in such administrative positions be basically in the service of the people, or be a guide to their death? Is suicide prohibited in Iran or recommended? Do they treat their fellow human beings in this way in heathen countries?

I was engulfed in these thoughts and was wandering about when I saw an elderly lady, about 60 to 65 years of age, who had apparently been sent this way and that way several times, and was talking to an employee of the cooperative. Suddenly, this lady began to cry and shout and hit herself on the face and head, attracting everyone's attention. Everyone forgot his own problems and came to this lady. Crying and weeping, the lady said: Today I borrowed 50,000 tumans and came here. Apparently, on her way to the Cooperative Company, the money was stolen or lost. This old lady was crying so hard that tears filled her eyes. She was constantly saying: I am ruined; call my place of work and ask, I am not lying. At this time, one of the clients, a young man of about 40 years of age, stepped forward, opened his briefcase, pulled out a traveler's check for 50,000 tumans and said: Dear Lady, do not be sad. He was about to leave the desk. The old woman's face revealed her embarrassment at taking the money, but 50,000 tumans was no small amount for her. She wanted to kiss the hand of the young man, but the young man would not allow it. She sat on the floor to kiss the young man's feet, but the man immediately moved away from the old woman. At this time, I was lost in the thought of, under one roof and one place, what events can occur. A young man with such dignity, politeness, and upbringing enchants everyone without his being known to them, and at the same time, an individual in charge puts all values, slogans, and dignity into question. These thoughts were going through my mind as the pages of a book, when Mr.... came into the room and sent all the

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

clients, including the above-mentioned generous young man, out of the room. I took the opportunity to ask the man for his name. He asked: What do you want to do with it? I said: I want to engrave your name on my memory with this incident. He did not tell me his name, but the person who was accompanying him said that his name is Hasan Rafi'i. And then we said good-bye.

In conclusion, I leave the judgment and interpretations to the dear students and readers and declare to Mr.... and other such human beings decisively that we, the deprived strata, will not commit suicide, because we strongly and steadfastly believe in God and obey God's instructions.

Signature, Anonymous

Health Services and Open Violations

One of the important and vital issues in a government is the honesty and dignity of the officials with regard to the people, and if, God forbid, it is otherwise, trust and confidence will gradually weaken, and this is undeniable for a government of the people.

Up to a few years ago, it was stated in various speeches and books that the revered prophet of Islam had said: "Increase your offspring, because I will be proud of the number of my people on judgment day." But in the past couple of years, the government has reached the conclusion that it must prevent population growth by any means, and this is a good action because cultural, health, and welfare services must be devised in proportion to the population growth, and it is hoped that the government will gain the necessary success in this area.

What causes the astonishment of the salary earning and so-called vulnerable stratum is that officials count the past among the errors and mistakes of the people and punish them directly or indirectly. We all know that having more than three children has been considered a violation since 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994], and the fourth child is to be deprived of government privileges in order for the people to realize the issue and be satisfied with fewer children.

For example, in some of the ministries, especially the Ministry of Education, everyone who has more than three children must pay 250 tumans in insurance fees for every additional child, personally and directly every month. This was unexpected, because most of the children were from before the ratification of this law and are older. In other words, these children belong to a time before restrictions on the number of children were specified. More unfortunately, the honorable health and treatment officials do not stop here and have increased the per capita insurance fees of the poor employee parents from 220 rials [R] to R4,200 and have been deducting it since two years ago, along with the per capita insurance fees of over three children. The question is, if a poor teacher or employee has more than three children, should he pay for them? We suppose that there is no problem, and that we must pay for the additional children, even though these innocent children are from years earlier. What is the fault of our old parents who must also burn in this fire?

An iron smith committed a sin in Balkh. In Shushtar a coppersmith was beheaded.

There are many salary earners who have more than three children and at the same time have their parents as dependents. Why should they pay 420 tumans per person every month? Can we include the past in every law? Even though today the health insurance booklet is very ineffective and not very useful and can only be used for minor illnesses, such as colds and minor injuries, to be treated by young inexperienced physicians, the implementation of this law is contrary to the law, erodes the people's confidence, and causes disappointment and reactions.

Few employees and teachers have not closed their health insurance books and given them up, because they are unable to pay the per capita premium.

Hoseyn Taqipur, teacher

The Construction Jihad and Priorities

With greetings and praises for your alertness and precision in the writing of these items, I would like to inform you of what is witnessed, that the Construction Jihad of the Islamic Republic of Iran is engaged in a series of service activities, such as building roads, building bridges, building post offices, offering absolutely free services, building health centers, granting loans and livestock, building water purification systems, etc, in countries such as Tanzania, Somalia, and poor countries of this kind. Considering the severe inflation in the society and lack of some of these resources in some areas of our own country, or the recession in war reconstruction, etc., in the war-stricken regions due to budgeting or budget deficits, is it legally proper to spend the budget of this nation in places which are of no benefit and are merely for propaganda? Most people might not be happy with such illogical generosity. Please remind the officials that a light which is needed in the home is forbidden to be given to the mosque.

Mohammad, from Abadan

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

What Must We Do?

I send my greetings to the employees of PAYAM and wish your success in carrying out your mission from God.

I am a young 26 year old unemployed person who was forced to sell books on the streets to make a living. If it is not considered self praise, I only sold religious and beneficial books when I started this work. After several hours, general law enforcement officials confiscated my books, and after frequent visits, because it had been my first offense, a week later, they returned my books. I want to raise several issues.

Is this work considered a crime? Then, what should we do? Do not say, Do whatever you can find to do, because it has a low income and is not enough to make a living, assuming suitable work is found.

There are many people who make a living in this way, and the issue is vital to them. Is this among the Islamic laws, for a person not to have the right to make use of a square meter of God's land to make a living? For that matter, in a legitimate way, not like on Naser Khosrow Street, where I have seen myself that they engage in selling narcotics and drugs, playing with people's lives, etc. Then a person like me, who sells a few beneficial and constructive religious books, especially for our young generation who are the target of cultural invasion, cannot be active, only because of the one-sided and superficial reason that the city will look ugly if we engage in this type of work. Yes, the city may look ugly to the affluent capitalists, but for this group, that is, those in a weak situation, in terms of sending its message and problems, the issue is vital. In short, we are all responsible before God for our actions and neglecting the oppressed. I hope this situation is dealt with on the basis of the laws of Islam and the Koran and not the interests of a particular group.

What Is Your Pain?

Since the time of the publication of the weekly, I have read most of its articles, and I have seen the light of hope, freedom, and concern for the Islamic society among them. For this reason, I thank and praise all those involved in this weekly.

In truth, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the place of such publications that compassionately and eagerly engage in the examination of the social, political, economic, and cultural problems, God willing, and the path and frankness of this weekly, will cause other high-circulation publications and newspapers of the Islamic country to defend the goals and values of the revolution that show our Islamic values from a proper Islamic perspective, do not disregard the various deviations and problems of the society, and inform the officials, planners, and other strata in the society about them in order to eliminate the deficiencies and shortcomings and cause the growth and blossoming of the Islamic society more than ever before.

While wishing success for you Basiji and university brothers, I would like to ask for the publication of articles about the problem of panhandling throughout the city. We who claim the leadership and the establishment of the Islamic government and who follow the Ja'fari sect, a sect all of whose directives are for the establishment of justice and support for the oppressed, a religion that has lofty directives to eliminate deprivation among the deprived, in such a situation, when we step into the Islamic cities of our country and look at their squares, intersections, streets, and alleys, especially when we look carefully around this large city of Tehran, we become very sad, since there are beggars, people who have no guardians, and oppressed people who are visible before our eyes in a miserable condition, and there is no one to ask them, "What is your pain?"

In our country, in which after the revolution many agencies, organizations, and foundations were established to attend to the oppressed, such as the 15 Khordad Foundation, the Construction Jihad, the Foundation for the Oppressed, etc., now how is it that no one attends to the pain of these poor people who make the hearts of any passerby ache, while no attention is paid to their situation.

What would happen if an organization or institution would take charge of this charitable undertaking in order to gather all these people who are isolated from everywhere and attend to their pain? How much in funds does this require? In a country from whose financial and monetary resources thousands of cracks and holes are open to waste and extravagance, and from every corner of which we hear news of embezzlement, fraud, waste of the treasury, etc., and see with our own eyes what excessive expenditures are made for painting the curbs and decorating the parks and city squares, and for ponds and fountains by the City Hall, what would happen if we also spent somewhat for this charitable act to improve the Islamic society and for attending to the condition of the poor and those left behind?

What would happen if to please God and bring jobs to the heart of the imam of the age, who observes our actions, services were offered to eliminate the problems of those deprived human beings who are cut off from everywhere?

In any case, we must not allow the appearance of the Islamic society to look un-Islamic, and they would not

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

and we would not say, if Islam brings mercy, then who are these? Then, what happened to being Muslim?

I ask God to grant the planners, the deputies of the people and the implementors of justice and law success to be able to bring our Islamic society of Iran both in appearance and in substance closer to a more proper Islamic society.

In conclusion, I ask you revered brothers to make investigations in this regard throughout the cities, prepare articles, and inform the officials and the people, so that perhaps those in charge can pay attention to this issue, and this social problem will be resolved. God willing.

Your religious brother, Seyyed Taher Hashemi

The Center for Scientific Information and Documents, a Step in Which Direction?

In connection with the sacred goals of those dear ones, the following is presented for your information.

Some time ago, an announcement was published in high-circulation newspapers by the Center for Scientific Information and Documents, affiliated with the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, according to which the Center had announced that it would provide the information needed by researchers and students who are active in scientific research.

As a student in the field of economics who is very interested in scientific research activities in my educational field and have had several research experiences in this area, I corresponded with the Center and on 10/04/1374 [11 July 1995] received an interesting response from the Center in connection with the sale of information at such prices that the Center had established for them. (A copy of the rates by the Center is attached.)

As all experts know, the issue of scientific research, especially in the humanities and technical areas, is today at the top of the programs of the developed countries, and this issue is more sensitive in regards to developing countries, such as our own country, Iran. Today, not only has this issue not quite been institutionalized as an essential need for development, but, most unfortunately, we such institutions as the "Iranian Center for Scientific Information and Documents," instead of creating more extensive resources, providing the means to increase public motivation and, especially, attract the students more toward research activities and by collecting such information be like the vital arteries of the body of research, they engage in the sale of information in this way, with the motive of gaining income.

Of course, doing so would be no problem under the conditions that special funds are created for true researchers who have no motive but helping the movement of the country on the course of development, but under the present sensitive conditions, when our country has great need of researchers interested in the advancement of the country in industrial, cultural, and social areas, it will be like sticking "a cog in the wheels" of the research machine of the country.

Hence, on behalf of all the students who are interested in the progress and glory of our beloved country, Iran, I ask the honorable officials of that revered newspaper from the beginning of whose publication until now has proven its sincerity of intent and its support for the lofty goals of the Islamic revolution, and at the top of it, political independence that depends on technical, technological, and scientific independence, to report on the issue and urge the honorable officials to set aside the financial motivations for now, prefer the long-term and actual interests of the country to the short-term revenues of the institutions, and in this way provide more facilities for the students. Sincerely,

'Abdollah Yunesara'

Where Did You Get It?

Several years ago, it was said that a law was implemented that would probably eliminate most of the problems. The law of "Where do you get it?" and "Where did you get it?" Unfortunately, this project did not get anywhere but to be used as a joke in many meetings and circles.

Now, this humble servant suggests that you go and ask the downtrodden and lower stratum, where did you get it, to stay alive, and where do you get it to live? How is it possible for a family of 10 to pay rent, water and electricity fees, and fees for "the use of the television," "city hall fees," and thousands of other things, with 20,000 tumans and still keep up appearances? Go ask, so that perhaps this humble servant can learn it and keep my family of two afloat.

'Ali Fatemi

The Victimization of the Cooperative Sector

After more than eight years of discussion and study regarding the law of the cooperative sector of the economy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite the opposition, finally in Shahrivar 1370 [23 August-22 September 1991], it reached fruition, and after the ratification of the honorable Majles, it was approved by the honorable Council of Guardians, and with the establishment of the young Ministry of Cooperatives, the cooperative sector became hopeful of continuing its path and getting closer to its actual place, but the happiness of the people's cooperative sector did not last long, because, first, the Rural Cooperative Organization,

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

and after a while the Carpet and other cooperatives were separated from the cooperative family, and recently the bells of combining or dissolving them have tolled.

The news of it was very brief, but very sad: the combining of the Ministry of Cooperatives in the Ministry of Commerce. Even though the Ministry of Commerce needs strength and support, what is the relationship between cooperatives and commerce, to create such a thinking and to offer such a plan? Indeed, the lofty goals of the innocent Martyr, Dr. Beheshti, the founder of the idea of cooperatives, in the Constitution, in the people's cooperative sector, have fallen victim after many years. In any case, I find it necessary to make a few points.

1. One of the distinct manifestations of the activities of the cooperative sector in the are of regulating the market is procurement and just distribution of goods and prevention of monopolies, hoarding, inflation, and high prices. In this connection, despite the lack of cooperation and coordination of the sources for the allocation of goods with the procurement and distribution (consumer) cooperatives, based on the goods pricing project prepared by the Ministry of Cooperatives for the Consumer Cooperative Stores throughout the country, in comparison with the prices of the same goods on the open market, which are announced by the Ministry of Commerce, the goods sold in the cooperatives have been 15-20 percent cheaper. Undoubtedly, the average of 17.5 percent lower prices of goods in cooperatives and its role in conservation in families is a significant figure in the overall economy. Certainly, if there is the necessary assistance by the sources of allocation of goods, the goods will reach the actual consumer at much lower prices. Considering that the Ministry of Commerce regards itself as the custodian of the government and private sectors and has not been successful in controlling the market and regulating the actual prices, does the combining of the Ministry of Cooperatives and the Ministry of Commerce seem logical?

The spirit of the cooperative sector is contrary to the spirit of profiteering and the excessive demands of the private sector.

2. Undoubtedly, the problems due to the absence of the Ministry of Cooperatives and the central offices in the provinces will have ill and destructive effects on the course of development and achieving the goals of the Second Plan. On the one hand, the duties that the honorable deputies of the Majles have conferred in the Second Developmental Plan on the Ministry of Cooperatives will face problems in implementation. On the other hand, the supervisory and implemental duties of the central offices of the provinces over the cooperative projects (particularly the production cooperatives) that are in the process of operation, creation, or projection for the future will face stagnation in practice, and the implementation of these projects will be halted if the Ministry of Cooperatives is eliminated. This important matter is not in our interest and is not expedient given the present conditions of the country.

3. Are the honorable deputies of the Majles, "the proposers of these proposals," not thinking about the ill side effects of the ratification of this project, including the creation of a climate of pessimism in the society?

One is the climate of pessimism regarding the honorable officials of the sacred regime of the Islamic Republic in not enforcing the Constitution and creating the grounds for the domination of the private sector over the cooperative sector, and second is the creation of a climate of distrust in the stability of the policies made in the Majles and the government.

In any case, there is much to say, and it is expected that, as the late Imam said, we shall continue with the spirit of cooperatives for the progress of the country. The honorable deputies of the Majles must pay attention to this important matter with precision and expert study and prevent the combining, eliminating, and omitting of the Ministry of Cooperatives, as an organization that supports the cooperative sector and creates a balance between the government and cooperative sectors.

Weekly Satire

To Brother Karbashchi

Greetings to you, who continues the red path of the martyrs and a thorn in the eyes of the painless affluent, you who made the soul of the imam and the martyrs happy with your reforms.

The luxurious, chic parks and electrical buses, etc., that are bought from friendly countries have eliminated the spirit of oldness. Your innovations in the use of the techniques of the advanced nations (such as Japanese parks) have brought love for science and technology to the hearts of our young people. The modern newspaper and magazine are paths to civilization that have created anger and hate in global imperialism, which have not been shy to express it. For this reason, the Basiji brothers have rinsed their hands in prayer for you and have filled all the walls and doors in the city with praise for you, in the same way that you, too, filled the walls and doors of the city with their heroic acts. Of course, it is certain that the propaganda for foreign goods is mostly a clever trick by you to, in this way, enchant the heathen world and place the message of the revolution in their black hearts. Even though superficial people of

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

ill intent call this the spread of the imported consumer culture—though our nation will not be deceived by such rumors—you have converted the bases and the exhibitions of the time of war to recreational places, so that our children, instead of war and bloodshed, become accustomed to peace and tranquillity. For this reason, our nation, especially the Basijis and the families of martyrs, are so enchanted by the actions of you and your senior employees that they are trying, if they have the opportunity, to render you a deserving service.

We are waiting, with your measures, for the gate of the great civilization to once again be opened to our country, so that subsequent to these measures, the flood of tourists will come to our Islamic country, and the lowly Westerners can see the advancement of Western technology that has been formed in the heart of Islam by your capable hands and observe the scenes and pictures that throughout the city are associated with the scent of the martyrs. We, too, in addition to making use of the foreign currency and great income, can show the ugliness of the European life to the people first hand, in order for them to learn a lesson.

"Until we change this subjugated mind and replace it with an independent mind, we cannot operate this country."

Imam Khomeyni

Heartsick Basiji—signature, Anonymous

Self-Sufficiency Is Good, But...

The principle of self-sufficiency in the sense of full independence in every society brings along the causes of stability and the severance of the long hands of the foreigners, for which, thank God, after the victory of the revolution, indescribable efforts are made.

Now that we are at the start of the Second Five-Year Plan, we see that this principle of self-sufficiency, with the great and intolerable pressure on the people, is about to appear, because this issue has put so much pressure on the suffering people of Iran that instead of self-sufficiency and economic and social independence, it is sending us mostly toward economic and social dependence.

Is it not better to pursue a more fundamental policy for this important policy to which such attention is paid after the war? For instance, should we prevent the luxury items and also Mercedes Benzes at several million [tumans] and other luxury goods?

Is it not better to actually punish the violators and the thieves of the Treasury?

Is it not better to be the supporter and friend of the revered families of the martyrs, prisoners of war, those missing in action, the self-sacrificers, the freed prisoners of war, and the downtrodden?

With the hope for the day that the banner of Islam flies throughout the world and the Islamic revolution with the leadership of the leader and the source of emulation of the Shi'ites, his holiness, Imam Khamene'i, becomes eternal.

Rasul S. N. Kermanshah

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal: Foreign Minister Comments on Indian Border, Other Issues

BK1605131396 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 16 May 96

[Report by a "POST reporter" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu, May 15 — Foreign Minister Prakash Chandra Lohani said the time has now come to keep track of Indo-Nepal cross-border movement in view of the volatile political situation of the region.

"Both our countries should now discuss seriously the modalities for keeping track of the cross-border movement of people on both sides so that the open border does not become a source of problems in the future," Lohani said.

Lohani made this remark at a talk programme organized by Nepal Council of World Affairs here today, explaining the foreign policy stance of the coalition government.

Nepal and India have a long open border since time immemorial, giving their peoples unhindered cross-border movement. However, given the disproportionate size of the two countries, Nepal naturally gets the worst of the cross border movement.

One major irritant for India has been terrorists and militants allegedly using Nepal as a safe haven, taking advantage of the porous border. Indian media also claim Nepal is being used for organized anti-India activities.

Though it may not be possible to seal off 1000-km long border, Nepalis have long felt the need to "take measures that is in the interest of both countries," Lohani said.

Many feel the Bhutanese refugees problem is an open border hazard. Thousands of Bhutanese refugees have entered Nepal unhindered via India to escape ethnic cleansing unleashed by the Royal Government of Bhutan.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Referring to the protracted refugee problem, Lohani expressed hope that the refugees would be allowed to return to their country with "dignity" and "honour".

"If the refugees are not Bhutanees, then they are not Nepalis either," he said, adding Nepal should have patience to allow Bhutan to make its position clear.

Nepal's growing trade deficit featured prominently in Lohani's speech today. The age-old trade approaches with India and China are not working for Nepal, he said. "Nepal's trade deficit with India continues to increase rapidly and to some extent. The same problem is also being experienced with China."

He also revealed that Nepal and India for the first time are "seriously" trying to dismantle all sorts of non-tariff barriers that cropped in the past leading to imbalanced trade relations.

"On transit, we have agreed in principle that Nepal needs an alternative route to Radhikapur to trade with third countries via Bangladesh," he added.

Condemning the recent killing of 8 Nepalis by militants in Kashmir, he said the act was "cowardly" and "reprehensible".

Hinting at a possible arms race between India and Pakistan, Lohani hoped that "the two potential nuclear powers in our region will resist the temptation to go nuclear."

Nepal: Communist Party Opposition to Government Viewed

OW1705050896 Beijing XINHUA in English 0441 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu, May 17 (XINHUA) — The Communist Party of Nepal (UML), the country's main opposition, held a mass meeting here Thursday [16 May], commemorating its late leader Madan Bhandari and vowing to bring down the present government in the near future.

Thousands of UML workers and supporters gathered in downtown Kathmandu to pay tributes to late UML General Secretary Bhandari, who was killed in a mysterious road accident three years ago.

The accident occurred when the jeep that Bhandari and another leader of the UML were riding rolled down into a river near a highway in western Nepal.

UML leaders have alleged that the 1993 jeep accident was a conspiracy masterminded by those who did not want to see the rise of the Communist movement in Nepal.

However, an investigation panel formed by the then Nepali Congress (NC) government concluded that the accident was caused by the driver's negligence.

The driver, who survived the accident, was later sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment.

Addressing the meeting, UML President Man Mohan Ad Ikari accused the ruling coalition government of not functioning properly and vowed to topple down the NC-led government within constitutional norms in the forthcoming House session before mid-July.

He said the UML has launched a national awareness campaign in the nearly 4,000 villages of the country to help the people judge the performance of political parties.

A grand mass rally had been organized prior to Thursday's mass meeting, which organizers described as a display of "people's power."

Pakistan

Pakistan: Bhutto Emphasizes Democratic System

BK1705033996 Islamabad THE NATION in English 16 May 96 pp 1, 11

[Report by THE NATION "staff reporter"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chakwal — Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Wednesday declared that the democratic system which has dawned an era of service to people is firmly established and the vested interests cannot change it as the people themselves are its guarantors.

"The democratic system has commenced an era of service to people — an era of the fulfillment of ideals of Quaid-e-Azam and Quaid-e- Awam — and the self-centered leaders who want to change it, cannot do so because the people of the entire country are its defenders," she said addressing a large gathering at the ground-breaking ceremony of the gas supply project for five villages.

The Prime Minister warned that whoever opposes the system of people's choice would receive nothing but defeat. She openly questioned the courageousness of the 'political machos' who, she said never dared to challenge the deeds of dictators. "These unprogressive forces do not know that we have furnished 500,000 new gas connections for domestic consumption. They want to replace the democratic system with the one which will bring darkness to the villages.

"They want to bring a system which would subjugate the people of Pakistan but I want to tell them that the

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

dictatorships of Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan and Zia-ul-Haq are long over and now it is the era of Quaid-e-Azam in which all the people will get equal rights and fair treatment."

Prime Minister Bhutto said the PDF [Pakistan Democratic Front] government has waged a Jehad against poverty, corruption and hypocrisy. On the other hand, the so-called advocates of social justice, she added, have adopted hypocrisy as away of life, she said.

"They kept silent under the dictatorial regime of Zia-ul-Haq but when after a long struggle democracy has gained firm ground in the country, they have emerged as self-proclaimed champions of justice - this is clear hypocrisy which is strictly forbidden Islam."

She said during Zia's era, human rights were violated, tyranny ruled everywhere and corruption was rampant even in higher ranks but none of these so-called stalwarts spoke against it.

"Today everybody claims to be an advocate of justice and truth. I ask them why did they not speak of justice, truth and democracy during Zia's era. When Governor NWFP [North-West Frontier Province] was involved in drug-trafficking why did they not voice their concern against it."

Today, she said everyone enjoys complete independence in Pakistan. "There is complete democracy in the country, judiciary is free to administer justice, journalists are working in an open atmosphere and politicians are free to carry out their activities. This is because our politics is based on principles of justice and truth."

Benazir Bhutto said "when tyranny ruled over the country and people were terrified we fought the battle of principles, truth and justice."

The Prime Minister said those who talk about corruption do so out of despair because they cannot get loan from banks. "They have borrowed billions of rupees from the Pakistani banks but I have not borrowed even a single rupee — I ask them, is it not a reality."

She said her grandfather was not only a landlord but also a politician who participated in a Round Table Conference with Quaid-e-Azam but still she does not have a house of her own in Islamabad. Benazir Bhutto said she does not fear these self-proclaimed champions because she has full support of the people.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said when she came to power, the country was on the verge of economic bankruptcy with Karachi placed in a precarious predicament. She said the country was facing civil strife when she took over the reigns of the country.

"In Lahore, Federal police and rangers and provincial police were locked in a conflict and the national exchequer had been frozen while Nawaz Sharif and his ministers were setting up new factories." Benazir Bhutto said Nawaz Sharif's government which came to power through rigged elections, threatened me to give-up politics.

"They asked me to abandon the politics and leave the country or your husband would be treated the same way as your father was - but I said life and death are in the hands of Allah Almighty - I told them, come what may I shall not forsake the people of Pakistan."

But, she said "we had braved Zia's dictatorship and upheld the cause of truth so with unflinching determination and indomitable courage we took up the challenge to lead the country in the difficult situation — but in doing so, we never compromised on principles."

The Prime Minister said her government launched a courageous drive against terrorists.

"Despite threats to the lives of our ministers and myself we did not compromise with the terrorists — we said government is not something about making a hey-day." She said "we acted on the principle that a true leader endangers his own life while bringing his people out of danger."

She said, her democratic government is working to ensure justice to the people through the provision of facilities to villages, towns and cities across the country but some forces are against this progress.

Benazir Bhutto said her government has supplied electricity to an unprecedented number of villages and towns but there are some unprogressive forces who do not want to see any development in the country.

The Prime Minister made some announcements on the occasion which included a girl's college for Chakwal, a new bridge on River Swan at Shah Wali, 70 more villages to be electrified and rail service between Dome and Rawalpindi in lhe private sector.

APP from Islamabad adds: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said on Wednesday Mujahideen, following in the foot-steps of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), against Indian repression had made the World realise that where the 'Karbla' of modern history lies.

Addressing the opening session of 17th Hussainia Conference at a local hotel organised by the Markazi Imam Hussain Council, Prime Minister said, it was the matter of history that Yazids were eliminated and only those were remembered who sacrificed their lives for just cause. The opening session was attended by Chairman

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

of Parliamentary Kashmir Committee Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, Federal Ministers, Ghulam Mustafa Khar, Mohammad Afzal Khan, N.D.Khan, Syed Khurshid Shah and ex-Governor Punjab Makhdoom Sajjad Hussain Qureshi, besides religious scholars from all over the country and abroad Benazir said, "Being Muslims we have had immense love for the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and we always try to follow Khulfa-e-Rashdeen and Sahaba-e-Karam. We enlighten ourselves from their teachings." "We too have the greatest respect for the Saints, Sufis and Scholars who did a great service to Islam in South Asian region. They discharged their duties and found their place in the annals of the history," said Prime Minister.

Benazir said, history always asked individuals whether they were with Yazid or Hussain (RA). Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) replied this question of history and acquired eternal life.

"Let us assert, do we have answer to this particular question of the history?" asked the Prime Minister. Every Pakistani and Muslim should pose these questions to oneself.

"It is unfortunate that despite being the follower of the religion of tolerance, love and respect, few of us have made the religion and their beliefs a source of terror. The people who supposed to carry Holy books are clutching Kalashinkovs and hand grenades. The toxic of sectarianism are being spread," Prime Minister expressed anguishly.

The Prime Minister urged upon all the religious scholars and Religious Parties to come out of this world of hatred, "extremism will mar the very foundation of our religion." Religious scholars should do comprehensive research about religion so that the questions, penetrating the minds of our new generation, could be answered. "Try to bridge the gap between Scientific and Religious Knowledge," emphasised Benazir.

"We could not segregate ourselves from the world as Islam is against isolation. Once you develop a relation between the religious knowledge and that of scientific, you automatically bring yourselves out of mental strife. Pakistan's defence, economic and social power also hidden in this particular move and it is very important for making the Islamic World a great and modern entity," said Benazir.

She asked to create harmony between different sects, emphasising, "It is the need of the hour and very essential for national integrity."

The Prime Minister warned that government would not tolerate any violence during the coming month of Muharram, "Government has equal respect for every sect and will ensure to keep its sanctity."

The Prime Minister, on the demand of the organisers of the conference, directed to form a 10-member committee to look into the problems of religious scholars, ulema and mashaikh. The committee will consist of five Federal Ministers and five religious scholars.

Pakistan: Imran Khan Comments on New Party

BK1705035396 Islamabad THE NATION in English 12 May 96 pp 1, 13

[Report by THE NATION's "special correspondent"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — "We will sweep the elections in 1998." That's Cricket Hero Imran Khan, talking Saturday to Islamabad-based Foreign Correspondents' Association (IFCA).

Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif, Qazi Hussain Ahmad, etc. take note. You will, otherwise repent, if you don't start planning your future career right now.

But, don't push the panic botton just now.

If this fantasy is taken a bit further, does it not offer tremendous opportunities for democracy?

Imagine Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif sitting together on the opposition benches, and King Khan ruling the roost? That will be something. No?

Imran Khan spoke to IFCA members for more than two hours, candidly, without mincing words, full of optimism, without rancour, and because of his apparent conviction not sounding empty. Nor did he signal any sign of a lingering mind or indecision.

Asked: If the elections are held before 1998, because you never know what turn Pakistani politics take, what are your chances? "If we are organised by then, we will take part in the polls. If we are not organised by then, we are not ready to take part in the elections", said Imran Khan, without indulging any bravado.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said "Imran Khan is welcome to politics, but if he does not indulge in ball tampering," he was asked. "So far, it is she, not me, who is doing ball tampering against us. She banned our public contact meeting at Taxila on Friday. Is it democracy? Government's permission to hold a public meeting was cancelled. I am subjected to 24-hour surveillance by intelligence agencies. I am chased, wherever I go. My telephones are bugged. Is it democracy? Is it not ball tampering by her?"

He was asked about his graduation from a cricket hero to a politician. What's common between cricket and politics?

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Imran Khan, chief of his 17-day old Tehrik-e-Insaf, (Movement for Justice) said: "The principles of leadership are the same, including a teamplay, controlling tempers, assigning work to people according to their skills and capabilities". "When I was young I may have had short temper, or done other silly things, but no more," said Khan, now 42.

Asked whether his wife Jamima will have a political role in his party, or will she head the Women's Wing of the Party, as is the case with many other leaders who appoint their wives as chiefs of their party's women's wing, he said, "Not really. How can she lead a party or its women's wing? She is just my wife. She should have the merit to be head of the women's wing of the party".

He said his party expects big support, and financial assistance from overseas Pakistanis, especially those working in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia Britain and Europe. These expatriates had helped him with their big donations in completing his cancer hospital. "I am sure this time they will be offering much more financial help for my party. We don't need the money just now. The money will come when we turn the Movement into a political party," he added.

You have been playing cricket for years where you have to plan the game according to "overs" and "runs". How long, how many years, will you take to bowl out the corrupt politicians? He said, "In cricket we are told never to enter a match unless you are ready. This is how we are preparing ourselves to root out corruption and other injustices. We are bringing forward new leadership, new people, to select whom I am meeting people all over the country. After completing this task, we will publish our party's manifesto. Had we prepared the manifesto first, the people would have said it is not on track, and then we will have to change it. After sensing the people's feeling, we will prepare the manifesto and then stick to it".

He said 95 per cent people want change, justice and fair play, end of corruption, accountability of rulers and officials, both civilian and military. He asked, but how many people know what is written in the manifestoes of Pakistan People's Party and the Pakistan Muslim League? "None," he added.

He said his party's programme will come from the people, and not from the leadership. "Sitting in Islamabad, if Imran Khan prepares a programme or a manifesto, and three months down the line, it proves to be wrong or not on the right track, what's the use of having such a manifesto?" Imran Khan, Ms Bhutto's class-mate at Oxford, said his programme is expected to be unveiled in the next two to three months.

Initially you praised Zalfikar Ali Bhutto, the late Prime Minister, but you don't do so now, why?

Imran Khan said: "Mr Bhutto — Prime Minister Bhutto's father — started with a good programme, a programme of social justice, of introducing Socialism. But he later compromised on his programme. The people who joined hands with him and his party opposed such a programme. That's how it ended".

But, despite the strong arm methods which Imran alleged, Ms Bhutto, her intelligence services and officials are applying against him, he did not sound very bitter. In fact, when a correspondent asked him if any good work is being done by Ms. Bhutto, he said, "She has done good public relations for Pakistan outside the country". Pressed further and asked if he considers her to be so good, will he appoint her as his Foreign Minister on being elected Prime Minister of Pakistan? he laughed.

Asked whether he is ready to face all the hardships which a Third World politician has to endure, including going to jail, he paused, for a second, then he asked, "Why should every politician go to jail at one time or the other?" "I am not worth Quaid-e-Azam's shoes, but he is the one who did not go to jail. But, even then he did everything for his people which they could not even dream of."

You have been critical about Ms Bhutto, her government and her party, but you have been soft on dictators and their associates. Why? "I blame everyone for what he did. I am against all dictators, including those who are now in the government and posing themselves as champions of democracy. Look at the nine o'clock TV news. That's PPP's [Pakistan People's Party] propaganda machine."

He said he has launched his movement "to give people a choice, the people who have lost faith, the people who feel that no one wants to solve their problems. We have to fight for reform staying within the Constitution, and inside the Parliament. We will first mobilise the people, and then give them a Manifesto of our party. This is what I am currently doing, going around the country, mobilising the people."

The economy, he said, is in shambles. The inflation rate is 20 percent, 30 percent people are unemployed or under-employed, and 50 percent of all revenues go to repay the debts. The country should operate on the basis of self-help and self-reliance, standing on its own feet. A large portion of foreign assistance is siphoned off through corruption. Former Finance Minister Dr Mahbubul Haq estimates that Rs [rupees] 42 billion have been siphoned off through systematic corruption. A systematic looting of the nationalised banks is going

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

on. The bad bank debts in 1988 were only Rs 13 billion which have risen to over Rs 100 billion in 1996. Who is looting these banks? Whenever there is a change in the government, the heads of nationalised banks and financial institutions are changed. It is through them that the government indulges in large scale corruption.

A large number of Pakistanis working overseas including those with small amount of capital, wish to come back and invest in Pakistan, but the government corruption fleeces them. On the contrary, a large amount of money has been invested by their overseas population in India, China and Latin America. This is from where large amounts of investment come into a country. He said land reforms will have to be undertaken in order to break the feudal mind-set of the government and the rulers, and to free the country' s political and economic system from harmful practices of the feudals. This is what has happened in East Punjab and the countries called Asian Tigers. But other people also say that large cooperatives may have to be organised to benefit from large scale farm production. Agricultural Income tax will be levied and other measures will certainly be taken.

He said the VIP Culture will have to be ended, and the leaders who come to serve the people will not be allowed to become their rulers . The palaces occupied by the President, the Prime Minister and the Provincial Governors should be vacated and handed over for social institutions serving the people.

"The present annual expenditure to run the palaces occupied by the President and the Prime Minister is Rs 1.75 billion I am told. Isn't it shocking, in a country where 75 percent people don't get clean drinking water, and where the rate of literacy is one of the lowest in the world?"

Question: Have you hired an apartment in Islamabad to live here when you are elected Prime Minister?

Answer: (Smiles) I will like to live like the ordinary people.

Q. What will be your foreign policy, especially on India, Kashmir, nuclear programme?

A. A plebiscite should be held in the Occupied Kashmir according to the UN resolutions passed in 1948. Pakistan-India relations are closely linked to settling the Kashmir dispute. How can two poor countries afford to continue to spend large amounts of resources on defence? But defence is again linked to settling the Kashmir dispute. The nuclear programme is based on the fact that defence of Pakistanis paramount for a sovereign state. The matter can be discussed on a multilateral basis by India and Pakistan for an equitable and non-discriminatory settlement.

Pakistan: Leghari Interviewed About Kashmir, India's Elections, Economy

BK1605132196 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 14 May 96 p 10

[APP report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] JEDDAH: President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has called on the new Indian leadership, whoever it may be, to get rid of the idea that Kashmir was a part of India and come to the negotiating table to find a way out of the impasse that has bittered the relationship of the two neighbouring countries very severely.

"Let any party come to power in India, the Congress or the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party), it won't make a difference because as far as Kashmir is concerned, their policies are all the same," he told 'UKAZ and SAUDI GAZETTE during an exclusive interview in Madina after he performed Haj.

"Pakistan is willing to talk bilaterally at a multilateral forum with international mediators. We are willing to talk meaningfully and we do not want to talk for the sake of talks. We want to talk so that we can arrive at a solution," President Leghari said.

"All Pakistan wants and the people of Kashmir want is the implementation of UN resolutions. The people of Kashmir are fed up, they do not want any elections and the last time India tried to hold polls there, only two or three percent turned out. Now again they want to hold elections," he said. "The entire Kashmir leadership has said no, and even their own man Farooq Abdullah has said no to this kind of unwanted election. So we feel that the only way out is a peaceful settlement," Leghari said.

If this problem was resolved it would benefit equally the peoples of both countries, he said, as both Islamabad and New Delhi are spending huge amounts of money on stationing troops and equipment in the area. Leghari said there would be a reduction of conventional forces and a subsequent end to the arms race in the region and the much needed cash saved by this move would only help in the uplift of the poor and illiterate in both countries.

"Look to the future", he urged New Delhi,"and see the benefits the one billion people of India and Pakistan will reap if this issue is resolved peacefully. [end quotes missing as published]

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

"Look at the new opportunities that would come to our people for economic and trade development, for mega regional projects like the multi-user gas pipeline plans from Turkmenistan, Qatar and Iran to India and Pakistan," he cited.

The president also pointed out the benefits for a large economy like India if the trade routes to Central Asia through Pakistan were opened up.

He said India and Pakistan had resolved all their water disputes way back in 1960 and despite wars between the two countries after that, the issue was never raised again. He hoped the Kashmir problem would be resolved similarly and stressed that the lone issue that stood in the way towards the establishment of a mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries was Kashmir and only Kashmir.

Pakistan is to host an extraordinary session of the heads of state of the OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference] in March '97 which coincides with the 50th anniversary celebrations of the formation of the country and the president thanked the Islamic countries that had responded positively to the proposal and agreed in principle to attend the session.

"This event will mark the 50th anniversary of our existence as a separate sovereign nation state and Muslims all over the world look to Pakistan as a source of strength for the Ummah," the president said.

"Pakistan has come a long way despite severe difficulties ever since we came into existence... Wars were thrust on us and efforts were made to sever Pakistan and unfortunately there was a division the country which led to the creation of Bangladesh. Despite the traumatic days and traumatic experiences, we have survived and we are growing stronger.

"I assess our unity in our strength from two or three major factors. One, of course, is whether there is consensus amongst people in the country on the major issues that confront us and I very strongly believe that there is a major consensus. As we in Pakistan note the environment around us, we see the Kashmir problem as a very important issue facing us and our people. And on Kashmir there is consensus, even beyond consensus, unanimity among all political parties and different shades of opinion," the president said.

"Then there is the issue of our security concerns and foreign policy. There too among the two major political coalitions in the country, the government and the opposition, there is consensus on what our security arrangements should be and what our security policy should be.

"Then comes our nuclear programme there again there is consensus.

"Then comes the area of the social and economic environment and in both these areas again there is remarkable amount of consensus amongst the two opposing groups," he said. "Usually in most countries of the world there are strong differences of opinion on how the economy should be shared and how the social programmes should be, but in Pakistan there is consensus on the social action programmes to uplift our people in education and health care.

"Then the major strands of the economic policy like whether the private sector will be the major engine of growth and what will be the role of the government, there again there is consensus. It is believed now by both the ruling party and the opposition that the government should confine its role primarily to managing soundly the macro-economics, to keep budget deficits low, to keep inflation low and although there is lot of criticism about how well our government is implementing these plans, on major policies there is no difference.

"Then also about the question of privatisation, about the question of trade liberalisation, on the need for further liberalising, on the need for further liberalising the economy, for divesting major state enterprises and allowing the private sector to take over... in all these areas there is a remarkable degree of consensus," the president said.

"So this I think is the major strength of Pakistan because on all the major issues that confront us, the people of Pakistan have the same feelings. But I must say here, that in a democracy there is always a lot of noise, there is always lot of effort for power politics and power play.

So at times the din of democracy, the din of the power politics, jams out the manifestation of this consensus. But this consensus is the strength of Pakistan."

"Terrorism is a problem we face all over the world and it is not unique to our area alone, but this phenomenon increased in dramatic proportions during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent battles for power in the country," he told the SAUDI GAZETTE and 'UKAZ during the course of an extensive interview in Madina recently.

The governments of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan had gone out of their way to get the opposing groups to the negotiating table and pave the way for peace.

"Inspite of the Makkah accord and the Islamabad accord these people continued to fight," the Oxford-educated president said.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

"We do not allow any terrorists to operate in Pakistan and whenever we find that there are terrorists on our soil, our security agencies move in swiftly to arrest them and hand them over. Several terrorists have been handed over to various governments."

"In 1978-79 no hard drugs existed in Pakistan, we were literally almost free from it then, but today there are more than three million drug addicts in Pakistan. This is all because of the fact that we played a major role during the Afghan war.

"On the Karachi situation, the president said some groups in Karachi, to gain control politically, developed terrorist units thinking they could achieve their goals through violent acts. "No Pakistani could allow this and that is why successive governments which held office and belonged to different political groupings have fought back against terrorism in Karachi," he pointed out.

"Terrorism in Karachi has existed for more than a decade now and, by the grace of god, in the last six months it has come down dramatically. The government has been able, through better intelligence and through greater co-operation of the people of Karachi, to neutralise most of the terrorist units," the president said.

"At the height of terrorism in Karachi, on an average, 15 to 16 people died daily, but with the measures taken by the government, which I think have great room for improvement, this rate has come down to less than one person a day now," the president, who joined the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in 1973, said. "So there is a dramatic change and the people of Karachi feel much happier. Karachi is a big, city with a population of 12 million people and its own infrastructure has not kept pace with the increasing population and so there are many reasons for the perception of unhappiness in Karachi.

"We do know about camps where India provides terrorist training. Our agencies and the government have confirmed this' through statements from those arrested and interrogated and they gave full details on it. But we don't wish to make this a big international issue and we do feel that effective measures taken by us at home in Karachi would be more productive than merely accusing another country all the time.

"There has been a great deal of foreign investment in the city," and the president cited examples to back the claim. "There is a plant being set up by ICI—the Imperial Chemical Industries—at cost of 450 million dollars. Then there are power plants being set up in Karachi valued at more than three billion US dollars. The government is engaged in some heavy spending to improve the infrastructure in Karachi."

Referring to the Muhajirs, Leghari said it was important that the problems of this major ethnic community, which is about 45 per cent of the population of Karachi, were attended to.

"It is important that they be again involved closely in the decision making process. Attempts' are being made, both from the government side and from the Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) to start some kind of a dialogue.

The president said Pakistan had a role to play as a modern progressive and Islamic country and forward peace by acting as a bridge between Islamic civilisation and the west. "There is a lot of misunderstanding in the West about'

Islam and there is a lot of in-built prejudice against Islam which dates back to the days of the crusades and Islam has been unfairly dealt with at the international level. So, there is need to clear the atmosphere. We have been hearing about doomsday scenarios and about clash of civilisations. Islam is a religion of peace, its message is peace there is no need for a clash of civilisations.

We would like to spread the noble message of Islam which is one of peace."

"We feel that Pakistan can play a very important role along with brotherly countries like Saudi Arabia in bringing about a major change in the thinking in the west and in some other countries about Islam," President Leghari said.

Pakistan: Editorial Views Leghari's Advice to India on Kashmir Talks

BK1605132796 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 15 May 96 p 10

[Editorial: "Kashmir Dispute—President Leghari Advises India To Hold Serious Talks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said that Pakistan wants a settlement of the Kashmir dispute through international mediation and meaningful talks and that the new government to be formed in India should also give serious thought to the Kashmir problem. India will have to come to the negotiating table giving up the claim that Kashmir is its integral part. Tension between India and Pakistan cannot be resolved unless this dispute is settled.

The president expressed these views in an exclusive interview with the Saudi newspapers SAUDI GAZETTE and 'UKAZ. The president said that this dispute could

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

not be settled, despite three wars between India and Pakistan. This issue can be resolved only through the resolutions of the United Nations.

It is due to the breach of promise in implementing the UN resolutions and the efforts to keep the Kashmiri people under Indian subjugation that the Kashmiris were forced to wage an armed struggle against India. For the past six years, India has failed to control the Kashmiri Mujahideen using its military forces. Indian troops, numbering 600,000, have used every kind of inhumane oppression to suppress the aspiration for freedom among the Kashmiris. So much so that India has not been able to stage the drama of sham elections in Kashmir instead of holding a plebiscite.

The Indian plan to hold elections in occupied Kashmir according to the Indian Constitution has been totally rejected by the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, as well as by Farooq Abdullah's National Conference. Pakistan is firm in its stand that this issue must be settled only by allowing the Kashmiris to exercise their right to self-determination according to the UN resolutions. Pakistan held many rounds of talks with India for this purpose. India, however, very stubbornly continues to claim that Kashmir is its integral part, and has started demanding that Azad Kashmir should also be handed over to settle the problem.

India tries to deceive the international community into thinking that it wants a settlement of the dispute by offering negotiations, but Pakistan is not willing to hold talks. Therefore, maintaining its stance, Pakistan has made it clear that future talks will only be held if India is ready to discuss the schedule for a plebiscite in Kashmir. Pakistan is not ready to waste time on meaningless negotiations.

Though the president has asked the new Indian Government to think seriously about the Kashmir issue, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and other political observers have said that Pakistan should not have any high hopes no matter who forms the government in India, since the Hindu leadership of India has never reconciled with the creation of Pakistan. The evil desire of establishing a Greater India remains their goal. A coalition government is more likely to be formed as a result of the latest election, and it seems that Narasimha Rao might become the prime minister again. If this happens, then there is absolutely no chance for a settlement of the Kashmir issue according to the UN resolutions. If any Hindu extremist party comes to power, there is no possibility of settling the Kashmir dispute according to the UN resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Pakistan, as a party to the Kashmir dispute, is bound to support the struggle for freedom and liberation of Kashmir, and it should continue its support. Pakistan should continue to raise the Kashmir issue and to unveil India's noncompliance with the UN resolutions in every international forum. The atrocities inflicted on the Kashmiri people should also be publicized at the international level. In this manner, the world community can come to know the real character of the world's largest democratic government and how it is violating the rights of the Kashmiris. The whole world is now aware of the struggle of the Kashmiri people, and their sacrifices have brought them closer to victory. India will have to either enter into negotiations with Pakistan to set up a schedule for a Kashmiri plebiscite, or the sacrifices of the Kashmiri Mujahideen will force India to leave Kashmir.

The Indian rulers should pay attention to the analyses of their own military experts, who are clearly saying that India has lost Kashmir and that the Kashmiri people will surely win their independence some day.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: LTTE Reports Concern Over Detained Tamil Youths

BK1705033596 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 14 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Three soldiers were killed and several others seriously injured when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] attacked a Sri Lankan military contingent in Vadamarachchi on 12 May. The troops were riding on a tractor from Gerudavil to Chavakachcheri when they were ambushed by the Tigers. The tractor was badly damaged. A number of weapons and military equipment were seized by the LTTE.

Sri Lankan troops are enforcing a night curfew in the Velikamam area. This curfew is in force from 1800 to 0600. The military has asked people to remain indoors during the curfew period and warned that curfew violators will be fired upon.

Seven valiant Tigers attained martyrdom in a confrontation with Sri Lankan troops in Jaffna District on 31 March. The following freedom fighters embraced martyrdom: Lieutenant Kadiravan, Lt. Thirumalaiyappan, Lt. Sobithan, Second Lt. Seelan, 2d Lt. Chenthamarai, 2d Lt. Maraimalai, and Valiant Tiger Sivakumaran. Our tributes go to these national heroes who completely dedicated themselves in the holy war to retrieve our motherland from the enemy forces.

Trucks carrying food to Wanni are not able to complete their trip; they are stranded at Vavuniya because the People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

[PLOTE] group is improperly demanding ransom from these trucks at the Tandikkulam checkpost. Because of this, the food crisis in the Wanni area has deteriorated. The distribution of dry rations to the people has also been stopped. It is reported that this high-handed behavior by the PLOTE is taking place with the concurrence of the Sri Lankan Government and all steps to prevent it are futile.

Sri Lanka's human rights organizations have expressed concern over the fate of Tamil youths arrested in areas controlled by the military. It has been reported that the secrecy about their condition is a cause for alarm. There have been doubts that as the bodies of the missing have been recovered since the tenure of the previous government, the same thing might occur with this government. These human rights organizations state that the military high command admitted arresting more than 60 Tamil youths in Jaffna only after (?two) weeks and that the military high command acknowledged it only after people spread the news that they saw these youths being brought to Trincomalee by ship and transported on to Colombo on vehicles. These human rights organizations are apprehensive that the details of those already arrested and those being arrested are being concealed.

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga has undertaken a four- day official visit to Japan. This visit is reportedly being undertaken to attract Japanese investment to Sri Lanka.

The Tigers' aspiration is for the motherland of Tamil Eelam! Thanks.

Sri Lanka: Jaffna Reconstruction To Proceed With Foreign Aid

BK1605130896 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jaffna reconstruction activities will be launched soon with foreign assistance. The acting minister of defense, General Anuruddha Ratwatte, said that several countries had volunteered aid and already $250 million have been received as loans.

Roads, drinking water, electricity, reconstruction of hospitals, provision of basic amenities and food, and welfare measures will be given priority under the rehabilitation program. Reconstruction and rehabilitation activities are expected to be completed within three months as more aid was forthcoming from several other countries. The civil administration activities now conducted by the military will be handed over to civilians soon. The magistrate's court and district court buildings destroyed by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] will be rebuilt as soon as possible. Gen. Anuruddha Ratwatte said plans are under way to expand the Kankensaturai harbor.

Sri Lanka: Private Sector Urged To Import Rice; Duty Cut to Zero

BK1705090496 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 17 May 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Government has decided to let rice bondsmen import 500,000 metric tonnes [Mt] of rice this year to meet the shortfall created by an insufficient Maha harvest, a spokesman for the Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Food said.

"Therefore, on a recommendation made by our ministry, the government has decided to reduce the import duty on common varieties of rice to zero level from 35 percent," he said.

He said this measure will encourage the bondsmen to import rice and reactivate bonding operations.

He quoted the Food Commissioner as saying that bondmen have already made arrangements to import rice under the bonding scheme.

"We felt that there is no need for a state agency like the CWE [Cooperative Wholesale Establishment] to import rice under such circumstances, incurring heavy interest rates on bank borrowings. Minister Kingsley T.Wickramaratne has already advised the CWE not to go ahead with a tender it has floated to import 25,000 Mt of rice".

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 352
MERRIFIELD, VA.

This is a U.S. Government publication produced by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Its contents in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

FBIS collects, translates, disseminates, and analyzes foreign open-source information on behalf of the U.S. Government. Its publications may contain copyrighted material. ***Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.***

— Bracketed indicators before the first sentence of each item describe the way in which the material was processed by FBIS.

— Headlines and all bracketed explanatory notes are supplied by FBIS.

— Personal and place names are rendered in accordance with the decisions of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names as adapted by FBIS. Unverified names in radio and television material appear in parentheses and are spelled phonetically; words and phrases in parentheses preceded by a question mark are unclear in the original and deduced from context.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

U.S. Government Customers

For a list of FBIS products, to subscribe to an FBIS publication, or to indicate a change of address contact:

FBIS
P.O. Box 2604
Washington, DC 20013-2604
Telephone: (202) 338-6735
FAX: (703) 733-6042

Non-Government Customers

Subscriptions are available from the National Technical Information Service:

NTIS
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161
Telephone: (703) 487-4630
FAX: (703) 321-8547

New subscribers should expect a 30-day delay in receipt of the first issue.